

LIGHTS OUT

LIGHTS OUT

A PLAY

In Four Acts

By FRANZ ADAM BEYERLEIN

AUTHOR OF "'JENA' OR 'SEDAN'?"

TRANSLATED BY H. HAVELOCK

LONDON: WILLIAM HEINEMANN

MCMV

THE PERSONS OF THE PLAY

CAPTAIN VON B. BANNEWITZ LIEUTENANT VON HÖWEN LIEUTENANT VON LAUFFEN SERGEANT-MAJOR VOLKHARDT CORPORAL QUEISS CORPORAL HELBIG PRIVATE MICHAEL PRIVATE SPIESS	*3rd Squadron, Magdeburg Uhlan Regiment, No. 25*

MAJOR PASCHKE, *19th Alsatian Artillery*

CAPTAIN LEHDENBURG, *10th Palatinate Cuirassiers*

LIEUTENANT HAGERMEISTER, *186th Infantry*

FOURTH MEMBER FIFTH MEMBER	*of the Court-martial*

PROSECUTOR

COUNCILLORS

SECRETARY

A DOCTOR

AN ORDERLY

KLARA VOLKHARDT

THE SCENES OF THE PLAY

THE FIRST ACT

ORDERLY-ROOM IN THE BARRACKS

THE SECOND ACT

LIEUTENANT VON LAUFFEN'S QUARTERS

THE THIRD ACT

COURT-ROOM IN THE BARRACKS

THE FOURTH ACT

LIEUTENANT VON LAUFFEN'S QUARTERS

The action of the Play takes place at Sennheim, a small garrison town on the German frontier, in Alsace

TIME: THE PRESENT

LIGHTS OUT

THE FIRST ACT

THE SCENE.—*The squadron orderly room.*

A bare apartment, painted gray. In the side wall, right, a window with a striped blind. In the centre wall a door painted brown. Before the window a fairly large table, with writing materials, &c., and a wooden chair in front. To the right of the door a frame for hanging up caps, &c.; further off, a small cupboard for papers, and in the corner an iron-bound chest. Left of the door a smaller table, under which a bench is shoved, in the corner a metal washstand, on the wall the towel. On the door hangs the inventory, on the frame a lance-cap, a bandolier, and a belt, with the Sergeant-Major's sabre. His cap lies on the small table.

Bright mid-day light.

CAPTAIN VON BANNEWITZ, SERGEANT-MAJOR VOLKHARDT.

BANNEWITZ.

[*Leans against the table, right, and reads a list of official shape; he is in his overcoat, the skirts buttoned back, bandolier, and field-sack, but wears a cap. The uniform is not too new and fairly dusty, for he has just come off parade. He has a stock-whip under his arm, and is smoking a cigarette. Half to himself—*]

M'yes. That we can quite well leave like that. Only—[*he lets the list drop lower*]—Sergeant-Major—

VOLKHARDT.

[*Has been writing at the table, left, springs up and stands to attention.*] Sir!

BANNEWITZ

[*Resignedly*]. Sergeant-Major, if you knew how nervous it makes me, that springing up and that awfully exact observance of the prescribed position—Lord knows, Volkhardt, you would not do it.

VOLKHARDT.

Very well, sir.

BANNEWITZ.

Oh, yes, very well—but you do not do it. [*He threatens him playfully with his whip.*] Look here, Volkhardt, I will spoil your blank defaulters' sheet one of these days with a couple of days' arrest for continued disregard of the wishes of your squadron commander. Well, now, this allotment of the horses for autumn manœuvres - on the whole, I have no objection to make, only you have assigned Lieutenant von Lauffen, in addition to his regimental charger, "Caroline."

VOLKHARDT.

You will excuse me, sir. Lieutenant von Lauffen is to lead the third troop, and "Diane," that your honour knows, is a wretch! A knacker she is, a regular damned carrion!

BANNEWITZ.

That is quite right, Sergeant-Major. That is just why Lauffen is to ride her. He can do it. Can he not?

VOLKHARDT.

[*Beaming.*] Certainly he can.

BANNEWITZ.

Well, then.

VOLKHARDT.

Excuse me, sir, but that makes a bad impression on the men if the troop leader is in difficulties before the front. And above all when the animal is horsey, it is as if it was its nature to go on its hind legs.

BANNEWITZ.

Volkhardt, your head is swimming. It is very honourable of you certainly to stand up so for Lieutenant Lauffen. His papa, the old Excellency, hacked you out from among the French Cuirassiers at Vionville in '70, and so you naturally do not want to be responsible for the son coming a cropper with his nag. Give the Lieutenant the restive beast, and don't trouble.

VOLKHARDT.

Very well, sir.

BANNEWITZ.

Then you will report to me so to-morrow.

VOLKHARDT.

Very good.

BANNEWITZ.

M'yes, and look here, you don't go with other people. Here [*pointing to the list*] is Sergeant-Major Volkhardt, "Derfflinger." Well, you know, Sergeant, that buck-jumper, I should not like to ride. The brute plunges

so that every time it is enough to mash up an ammunition loaf. A man should not undertake too much. And you don't get younger, Volkhardt. Fifty, and thirty-three years in the service! You may well let yourself go a bit easy.

VOLKHARDT.

Excuse me, sir, if you mean it this way, Captain, that I am too old and cannot do my duty properly—then I beg the Captain most obediently to tell me so. It will be very hard for me to leave the regiment.

BANNEWITZ.

[*Slaps the tops of his riding-boots thoughtfully with his whip, then looks sharply at the* SERGEANT-MAJOR.] Volkhardt, I think, Lord knows, that this must be the first time since I have had the squadron that I ought by rights to be rough to you—beastly rough. Why, man, you know very well what all your superiors think of you, from the General commanding down to the youngest Lieutenant, do you not?

VOLKHARDT.

As you please, sir.

BANNEWITZ.

Well, then, let us leave it like that. And me of all people, Sergeant, I am the last person you should have behaved so to! In ten years one learns not only to value the Sergeant-Major, but to respect the man. Good Lord, I shall perhaps be a Major now soon, and who knows where I may get to then? But, believe me or not as you will, I shall not forget *you*, Volk-

hardt. You will always be remembered by me as the pattern of an excellent Prussian under-officer.

[*Gives him his hand.*

VOLKHARDT.

[*Falteringly.*] Thank you, most obediently, Captain, and—forgive me, Captain, it was wrong of me, but once for all, it is so; some time or other I must leave the service. And that time I do dread very greatly.

BANNEWITZ.

Well, Sergeant, I can well sympathise with you there. If your youngster were still alive, Volkhardt, it would be easier for you, I fancy. Would, perhaps have become as good an under-officer as his father. It is a pity about him.

VOLKHARDT.

[*Roughly.*] No, Captain.

BANNEWITZ.

Not a pity? Well, all right. But that is not nice of you, Sergeant-Major.

VOLKHARDT.

Forgive me, sir, but I think it was just as well that the accident happened when it did. As it is, I can think of my boy as a dear and, to some extent, good fellow. If he had gone on living—I don't know, sir, in the long run it might not have turned out well. That he liked a drink and went after women, well, that is like many another; but the gambling and—you know, sir—I think, with all respect, sir, it is as well as it is.

BANNEWITZ.

All the same, it would have helped you out when some day you take off the dear old tunic. [*Puts on his gloves and makes ready to go.*] As it is, Miss Klara must see to it by herself.

VOLKHARDT.

[*With a beaming face.*] Quite so, sir. The girl ought to have been the boy. There is no giddiness about her. One can count on her, sir.

BANNEWITZ.

[*With a little more animation than usual.*] Your Klara is a girl in a thousand. Whoever gets her for a wife will be a lucky man.

VOLKHARDT.

Quite so, and since the Captain happens to mention the subject --I suppose Corporal Helbig could get leave to marry? That is, if it came to that.

BANNEWITZ.

[*Somewhat slowly.*] Helbig? Yes, I do not think there would be anything against it. So he is the happy man? Why, of course you brought him up. So you have known the couple a long time. And to-day he is back from Hanover. At the Military School he behaved faultlessly, quite faultlessly; a bit heavy, but a good man. Do you think, though, your Klara would suit him, Volkhardt?

VOLKHARDT.

I do, indeed, think so, sir.

BANNEWITZ.

Well, that the little lady must know best herself, after all. Only one thing I do beg of you, Sergeant-Major, do not influence your daughter. She will best find her own way for herself.

VOLKHARDT.

[*Smiling.*] Excuse me, sir, that too would come very hard to me. The girl is good and honourable, but the proper military subordination I have not been able to teach her.

BANNEWITZ.

[*At the door.*] Well, Sergeant, thank the Lord! After all, the cavalry drill regulations do not apply to the whole world.

Enter KLARA *quickly, slightly embarrassed.*

KLARA.

Oh, the Captain will excuse me, I only wanted to ask father something.

BANNEWITZ.

[*Thoroughly polite, with something of the fatherly gallantry towards her of an uncle to his niece.*] That you shall at once. Only first I beg you to accept this flower from me. [*He eases a bough of hedge-roses out of his tunic.*] It comes from France, Fraülein Klara, and, who knows, perhaps it may come to war over it.

KLARA.

Let us hope not over that, Captain. [*She puts the flowers in her blouse.*] Did you go as far as that this morning early?

BANNEWITZ.

Yes indeed, as far as the frontier. Our friends, the Dragoons of Giromagney, were afoot already too. I plucked the rose from a French bush and cried to the enemy's captain, "*Pour mon amour!*" Then he saluted and replied, "*Bien des choses de ma part.*" So, Fraülein Klärchen, even the French Captain of Dragoons lays himself at your feet.

KLARA.

You will not get me to believe that, Captain. But the roses are wonderfully fine. Thank you for them.

BANNEWITZ.

And now I will no longer stand in the way of your question, young lady. Good-bye. [*Makes a slight bow.*] Morning, Sergeant-Major!

KLARA.

Good-bye, Captain.

VOLKHARDT.

Morning, sir.

BANNEWITZ.

Morning! [*Exit.*

VOLKHARDT.

[*Scolding good-humouredly.*] I wonder, my girl, how often have I told you already not to come bouncing in here? Well, now, say what you want. And then—— [*He whistles and points to the door.*

KLARA.

Directly, dad. Well, an orderly is come from the

sergeants' mess and wants to know whether the small cask that you—you, dad—have ordered for this evening is to be Colmar Lager or the genuine.

VOLKHARDT.

[*Draws himself up, then after a brief reflection.*] The genuine. [*Goes on writing.*

KLARA.

[*Smacks her lips.*] Thunder, that's grand! Of course the Magdeburg Lancers! Look here, dad, what's up?

VOLKHARDT.

Curiosity is up. [*Points to the door.*

KLARA.

Dad!

VOLKHARDT.

Girl, I have work to do.

KLARA.

When you have told me what is up you can go on with your writing till the evening. [*She squats on a chair.*] Well, father?

VOLKHARDT.

Well—some one has come.

KLARA.

Some one, that you order a cask of the genuine in honour of? I know of no such person.

VOLKHARDT.

Or, rather, some one has come back.

[KLARA *thinks it over for a bit and then shakes her head.*

VOLKHARDT.

From Hanover. From the Military Riding School.

KLARA.

[*Thinks it over again, then suddenly starts in alarm; all her gaiety leaves her.*] Otto?

VOLKHARDT.

Why, Klara, what is the matter? Aren't you glad of it?

KLARA.

Yes, yes, dad. Only I had not thought of it—not at all.

VOLKHARDT.

[*Scratches his head.*] Klara, come here. [*He draws her down on to his knee.*] That's it, child. Now look at me. [KLARA *hangs her head; with suppressed anger he adds.*] Deuce and deuce again! Surely you can still look me in the face? Do you hear, Klara? Or have you a guilty conscience?

[KLARA *forces herself to look her father in the eyes.*

VOLKHARDT.

That's right! Why, what could you have on your conscience? Now tell me, child, what is the matter with you? Something has come to you that I don't like at all. First you sing and trill like a lark—without any reason—and then again you hang your head like a foundered horse. And again without

reason. Klara, I don't like that. Then I think I am going to make you happy by telling you Otto is coming back, and you——

KLARA.

[*Gets up from her father's lap, then somewhat defiantly.*] I do not know what you want, father. Yes, I am glad that Otto is coming back, but to jump as high as the ceiling?—Why, that is not the thing to be done.

VOLKHARDT.

Why, I suppose you two—it is all settled, isn't it?

KLARA.

Who said so?

VOLKHARDT.

Oh, thunder! Let any one understand you women who can. I have seen what I have seen, girl; don't stand there so like a mule. Open your lips rather and——

LAUFFEN.

[*Comes in hastily, in the same trim as the* CAPTAIN.] Sergeant-Major, the Captain would like to see you about a forage voucher. They have, I believe, supplied six bundles of hay too little.

VOLKHARDT.

[*Eagerly.*] Very good, sir. It is the last voucher. [*Pulls it out.*

LAUFFEN.

[*Greeting* KLARA *meanwhile with some little awkwardness.*] Day, Fraülein Klara!

KLARA.

Good day, Lieutenant.

LAUFFEN.

[*To the* SERGEANT, *who is hurrying out of the door with the paper.*] The Captain is in the remount stable.

VOLKHARDT.

[*As he goes off.*] Very good, sir.

[*Exit.*

LAUFFEN.

[*Kissing her.*] Morning, mouse!

KLARA.

Morning, Joachim!

LAUFFEN.

Slept enough?

KLARA.

What do you take me for? I have seen you already earlier.

LAUFFEN.

Really, you? Nonsense, you were still sleeping like a Pom.

KLARA.

Now, if you please. As if any could help waking up when a whole Lancer regiment marches out.

LAUFFEN.

Half-past two at night. It's a scandal. Lord knows, pet, it is often no easy time when one is serving with a frontier Corps like this. Fact! No mistake.

KLARA.

And you yawned, Joachim.

LAUFFEN.

Well, that's human; that may happen.

KLARA.

Yes, and you give Michael one behind the ears. I say, that is ill-treating soldiers.

LAUFFEN.

Why, yes. Just fancy, the cow had filled my flask with bay rum. Because the cognac was all gone.

KLARA.

Dirty dog!

LAUFFEN.

Quite so. And you? [*He draws her gently nearer to him.*] Of course you crept back again into your little soft white bed. [*He starts and pushes her away.*] Some one is coming.

[QUEISS *comes hastily in; as he catches sight of* LAUFFEN *stands to attention, notices* KLARA *with but little astonishment.*

LAUFFEN.

[*Sharply.*] What do you want, Queiss?

QUEISS.

Excuse me, sir, the Captain would like to speak to the Sergeant-Major about the last delivery of forage.

LAUFFEN.

I have told the Sergeant-Major so already. He has gone long ago.

QUEISS.

Very good, sir.

[*Exit, saluting punctiliously.*

LAUFFEN.

Unpleasant fellow, that Queiss.

KLARA.

I don't know—he never did anything to me, but I am afraid of him somehow.

LAUFFEN.

Oh, bosh! [*As* KLARA *looks up astonished, adds kindly.*] Nonsense, sweetheart. Something uncanny. Bah! How so? Disgusting sneak, that's all. A kind of a conspirator; a brute of a Socialist in a tunic, perhaps. Nothing open or frank. He looks like Father Filucius in "Pious Helen." Can't bear the fellow for the life of me.

KLARA.

[*Timidly.*] Did he notice anything that time?

LAUFFEN.

[*Unpleasantly moved.*] When?

KLARA.

That time—you know—when I was leaving you. He had just inspected the stables, and it was already a bit light.

LAUFFEN.

Nonsense, lass! That's just your fancy. He saw nothing. It's sheer seeing ghosts. Sure enough, fact.

KLARA.

God grant it! However, there is no help for it. But now I will go across. Good-bye, Joachim.

[*Makes for the door.* LAUFFEN *holds her back and kisses her.*

LAUFFEN.

Wait, do. A kiss in the orderly-room—why, that has probably never been known before.

KLARA.

[*Returns the kiss.*] Dear Joachim!

LAUFFEN.

[*In a low tone.*] Say now, sweetheart, won't you come over to me again once? In the evening? Eh, sweet, dear lass, will you? After tattoo, eh? Do, do say yes?

KLARA.

But, dearest——

LAUFFEN.

Oh, you! Say yes! Eh, lass?

KLARA.

It will not do.

LAUFFEN.

It will, it will. If you only would, sweetheart!

KLARA.

[*Meditating.*] The under-officers are at their casino over there, to-day; that's all right, but——

[*After a last hesitation throws herself upon* LAUFFEN'S *breast.*

LAUFFEN.

You will come, won't you?

[KLARA *nods, and releases herself from his arms.*

LAUFFEN.

Supposing I put the green shade over the lamp.

[KLARA *nods, and moves towards the door.* LAUFFEN *still holds her by the hand.*

Enter CORPORAL HELBIG *in Orderly's uniform, is astonished to find* KLARA *there. As he catches sight of* LAUFFEN *stands to attention and reports.*

HELBIG.

Corporal Helbig returned this day from Riding School to the squadron.

LAUFFEN.

[*Somewhat confused, then haughtily.*] H'm. Thanks, Helbig. Well—did you like Hanover? Lively place, eh?

HELBIG.

If you please, sir, it is fine there. [*With a glance at* KLARA.] But at home with the regiment it is still better.

LAUFFEN.

Bless the man, here at Sennheim? Well, as you

will. A matter of taste. [*With an air of dismissal.*] All right, Helbig. But I suppose you mean to wait for the Sergeant-Major?

HELBIG.

If you please, your honour.

Very well. [*Turns to* KLARA *to let her pass first.*] Please, Fraülein Klara.

KLARA.

Oh, no, sir. [*After a brief hesitation.*] I must really wish my foster-brother good-day first.

LAUFFEN.

Your foster-brother, Fraülein?

KLARA.

Yes, there he stands, Lieutenant. [*Takes* HELBIG'S *hand with somewhat forced decision, and shakes it.*] Day, Otto!

LAUFFEN.

[*Bites his lips.*] Right, I had quite forgotten that. Volkhardt was your guardian, eh, Helbig?

HELBIG.

If you please, sir; and from the age of twelve I was brought up by the Sergeant-Major.

LAUFFEN.

Yes, yes, now I remember. [*Roughly.*] Well then I won't disturb you. Morning!

[*Exit, with a slight bow to* KLARA.

HELBIG.

[*After standing at attention to* LAUFFEN *and opening the door for him, grasps joyously at* KLARA'S *hand.*] Thunder, Klara, this *is* a surprise, eh? What, you had not the faintest idea I was coming? Ay, I made your father solemnly promise it should be a surprise, just like a flank attack at manœuvres. And it has succeeded finely, hasn't it?

KLARA.

[*With a feeble attempt to fall into the same strain.*] Yes, and how well, Otto! However, father *had* spoken to me of your coming back. Just before——

HELBIG.

[*Violently.*] So then he couldn't hold his tongue after all?

KLARA.

[*Trying to get away.*] Have you seen him already then, Otto? I will tell him.

HELBIG.

Oh, no, Klara! Stay here rather! Your father was with the Captain in the remount stable. I nodded to him on the sly; he is coming directly.

KLARA.

Yes, but I really must go across, a casino orderly is waiting for an answer.

HELBIG.

What of that? He can wait a bit, till his legs grow into his belly.

KLARA.

No, no. [*Makes for the door.*

HELBIG.

[*Places himself in front of her with outstretched arms.*] Halt! Who goes there? No one passes here.

KLARA.

Stop that horse-play, Otto!

HELBIG.

Horse-play! That is the usage of war, Klara. [*Moves towards her, then tenderly.*] Well, won't you really then say how do you do to me properly, Klara? When I have been away two whole years?

KLARA.

I have already given you my hand.

HELBIG.

Ay, ay. Well, then, I will just take my kiss. [*He tries awkwardly to embrace and kiss her.*]

KLARA.

[*Repulses him vehemently.*] Otto, stop that. I won't have it.

HELBIG.

[*Draws back bewildered.*] Well, then, don't. But—that's not exactly nice of you.

[KLARA *shrugs her shoulders and goes towards the door.*

HELBIG.

[*Beseechingly.*] Klara, what have you against me all of a sudden? We used always to get on very well together. Why are you now suddenly—so harsh to me?

KLARA.

My Lord, Otto, what should I have against you? Nothing, nothing at all. But you must see that the foolishness of those days cannot go on.

HELBIG.

So you call that foolishness, Klara? [*Imploringly.*] Just listen to me, Klara. See, what you now call foolishness I have been thinking of all the time I was at Hanover. This I can tell you, the service there is not easy, and in the first weeks Lord knows whether one's bones are really broken or one only fancies so; and the riding-masters—well, it was hard work to swallow that! And then—well, I often thought of here, and how good it was. And by-and-bye, when the business got easier to me, then I remembered the rest still more, how kind and nice you were to me—just what you now call foolishness——

KLARA.

Dear Otto, I am glad too that you have come back again——

HELBIG.

[*Roughly.*] Thunder! Don't act so foolishly. [*Then more pacifically.*] Klara, look you, all the long journey here, from yesterday morning and all night through, I was fancying all the while how glad you would be when I turned up so suddenly. I thought to myself, if she howled like a watchdog when you went away, now she will fall on your neck and—— And now you are all "just keep your distance." There must be some reason for it, Klara! Before, we used to give each other a kiss without any fuss.

KLARA.

Before, we used to call each other "sweetheart" and something else.

HELBIG.

[*Firing up.*] So that too is to stop? Now, at any rate, I know how things stand.

KLARA.

My Lord, Otto, if you would only be sensible!

HELBIG.

God damn me, shut your mouth! Don't mince matters any more!

KLARA.

[*After wincing, loftily.*] Do you think cursing will alter things?

HELBIG.

Oh, you can't listen to that now? Damn me again! You have grown damnably grand. Yes, I certainly

don't suit the fine miss any longer! No wonder, when a Captain dangles after you and makes you a present of flowers.

KLARA.

[*Looks up in astonishment. To herself.*] How can he know that?

HELBIG.

Yes, I am not quite so stupid. Before, when I reported myself, the Captain had the roses in his tunic, and now you have them in your bodice. Aye, there is naturally no more room for a common under-officer! He is something much more aristocratic--the old Captain, who has scarcely a hair left on his nut, and looks like a knacker with the spavins!

KLARA.

I only advise you don't let father hear anything like that. He would make the point of view clear to you forcibly enough. You seem to have become half a Red in Hanover.

HELBIG.

What stuff! a Red! But this I certainly have taken in: that an officer is only a man like one of us, and not God Almighty.

KLARA.

No one has said so yet, and for that matter it is all the same to me what you think about that. [*With eager entreaty.*] But one thing I will beg of you, Otto, don't go and make father's heart heavier than it is already. He is quite worried enough about his having soon to retire. And how that weighs upon him you

can well fancy. So do not let us burden him with our affairs as well! See, now, you have assured me more than once that you are fond of me—that—I am sorry for, because I cannot return it. I—I am fond of you, but quite in a different way. But, if you are really fond of me, do not vex my father.

HELBIG.

Ah, see now, Klara, when you are like that to me, then—then I am quite different directly, too. Then you can ask anything of me. And your father—where shall I drag him into it? If you no longer care for me, how could your father help me about it? And then, what I said some time back about the Captain, that was horrid of me, yes, really quite horrid. It was only blabbed out in a rage. I know he used to pet you even as a little girl, and that—[*with some bitterness*]—why, that seems to have remained just as it was.

KLARA.

Well now, that is talking sensibly. And it may pacify you to know—really the thing is not worth talking about—father stood yonder, and the Captain, when the flowers were given me——

HELBIG.

Klara, I do believe you. And really it was only foolish anger on my part. [*He walks up and down once or twice.*] I ought not to be so now anyhow—but do you know, I could sooner be jealous of Lieutenant Lauffen than of the Captain.

KLARA.

I should like to know how so.

HELBIG.

Well, he would not let your hand go at all a while ago. I saw it plainly.

KLARA.

He was joking.

HELBIG.

Why, yes. I think it was only that. He has got on, hasn't he? Four years ago I trained him as a Cornet; the young man at first would not take kindly to it; he was a bit spoilt; but I took him with a high hand, Master Beardless. And now, sure enough, he has become a fine fellow.

KLARA.

[*Nervously.*] Lord knows, Otto, things seem to go on finely at the Riding School. You have brought back expressions—before you did not talk so—so disrespectfully.

HELBIG.

Now, Klara, do not exaggerate so. I stand to attention before Lauffen as much as any one, and I carry out orders, for there is no help for it. But real true respect—I mean, in my mind—where should I get it from? I obey because that is my cursed duty and obligation; but I see all the same that he is nothing more than a young man with a fresh face and a little fair moustache, just what folks call a good-looking lad.

KLARA.

You have become a regular red-hot Socialist.

HELBIG.

Not a bit. I know what I swore when I was attested, and that I stick to.

KLARA.

And for you to peck at Lieutenant Lauffen of all people, that is simply—simply shabby of you.

HELBIG.

How is that? How so?

KLARA.

I should have thought you would know.

HELBIG.

Of course I know. The Lieutenant's father, the old Excellency, saved our father's life in '70. Good, that's the old man. But the young one?

KLARA.

[*Struggling with her anger.*] Just ask in the squadron or the regiment what he is like. We all think—the Colonel, the Captain, my father, and I, too—that he will one day be worthy of his Excellency. Yes, indeed.

HELBIG.

You—you stand up for the Lieutenant very strongly, Klara.

KLARA.

Oh, not at all. But I do not allow him to be slandered. Nor to be belittled or made contemptible either.

HELBIG.

[*Something beginning to dawn on him.*] You—Klara?

KLARA.

[*Hurries to the door.*] I must now go across at last.

HELBIG.

Lauffen, then?

KLARA.

[*Stamping her foot.*] Keep his name out of your mouth! Do you see? [*Exit.*

HELBIG.

[*At first means to follow her and goes a couple of steps towards the door.*] Just wait! [*Then flings his sabre hard on the floor and throws himself into a chair at the table, right, burying his face in his hands.*]

[QUEISS *comes in and is proceeding to stand at attention by the door; then, as he recognises* HELBIG, *comes forward more carelessly.*

[HELBIG *looks about him, rises slowly and goes to meet* QUEISS.

QUEISS.

Day again, lad!

HELBIG.

[*Shaking his hand.*] Day, Queiss!

QUEISS.

Well, what a long face you are pulling

HELBIG.

I? I should like to know.

QUEISS.

[*Shrugs his shoulders, and whistles the "Trot" call, then after a pause.*] Well, lad, how did you like it in Hanover?

HELBIG.

Much, very much.

QUEISS.

Have you nothing more to tell? Dammit! That is not much. Has a nag given you a wipe on the mouth some time that you can't use it, eh?

HELBIG.

Nonsense!

QUEISS.

You used not to be so slow with your tongue, dammit. [*Whistles the call "Charge, Charge!"*] Told off the horses yesterday for manœuvres. Have given you "Dolores."

HELBIG.

[*Indifferently.*] Yes? What sort of a beast is that?

QUEISS.

[*Whistling between his teeth.*] A brute. But I have made her tame. Well, you have learnt to ride now too. One learns it at the riding establishment, eh?

[HELBIG *nods.*

QUEISS.

Yes, indeed, dammit. Will be able to manage "Dolores." [*He imitates the action of a rider urging his horse forward.*] Sit tight, sit tight! Spine, spine!

HELBIG.

[*Somewhat swaggeringly.*] Don't let any one be alarmed. At the establishment there was a half-bred mare, "Penthesilea" or "Petersilie" or something of the sort, who would let no one up. As soon as any one came near her there were broken bones.

QUEISS.

Dammit! I like that. But it only happens with horses. So you rode her?

HELBIG.

No, but I was to ride her.

[QUEISS *gives vent to a contemptuous grunt.*

HELBIG.

And I should have ridden her too——

QUEISS.

Only——?

HELBIG.

She broke her neck. The animal and Captain Weinsperg. She belonged to him, you know.

QUEISS.

Weinsperg? Of the Baden Dragoons, eh? Dammit! A grand fellow. Was riding-instructor in my day. But that was bound to be the end of it.

HELBIG.

Bound? Why so?

QUEISS.

Used to spend whole nights with women. That makes you weak here and here. [*He flaps in succession his wrist, his upper thigh and his spine.*] Can't happen to me. [*Suddenly.*] Youngster, there is still time. Let her go.

HELBIG.

Who do you mean?

QUEISS.

Dammit! Don't try to blind me. Saw the woman shoot out of the door here, and you were running about here like a nag with the staggers. [*Vehemently.*] Let her go.

HELBIG.

Queiss, you know something.

QUEISS.

What should I know, eh? When I hear a petticoat rustling about the legs I look away, lad. Over it or up to it.

HELBIG.

Well, but little Klara has run about right under your nose, you must surely know what she has been up to the past two years.

QUEISS.

I have not run after her. Don't know what she has been up to.

HELBIG.

But, Queiss, here everybody is one on top of the other. If one comes to the barrack-door it means treading on another's corns. And there are women enough about who cannot hold their nasty tongues.

QUEISS.

I look away up there!

HELBIG.

And then comrades join in too. You must have heard them speak. You are not deaf.

QUEISS.

When they begin to talk dirt about their affairs with women, I am.

HELBIG.

[*Sharply.*] Then why do you say, "Let her go"? There must be a reason for your telling me like that to let Klara go.

QUEISS.

[*Laughs harshly.*] Klara, Grete, Liese, let her run! She is no one in particular. It means the nearest. "She" is woman, the human being! Let her go.

HELBIG.

You are crazy, Queiss. You, too, are the son of a woman.

QUEISS.

God blast me, lad, that must be true. But whether I am my father's son, that's another story. Look you,

lad, I was once like you—no, still gayer and more frisky. I was in the Second Lancers of the Guard then. I married. [*Laughs scornfully.*] Ha, ha, ha! And such happiness! And then all at once—*hi, presto!*—[*he whistles*] Gone! Girl gone, everything gone. One who could give her more for her toggery and fallals had run away with her. I don't know who. Never asked about it. But here, inside, you know, there began to be a sort of hatred which would like to smash up and devour everything. Against the women creatures first. And afterwards not only the women. The people that had money as well. For the man who took her away from me, he must have had a bit, for she was greedy for brooches and silk petticoats as a mare for horse. See, lad, at that time I could understand the people that kill folks, the higher up the better. For when one sees every one so base and filthy, then one must hack into them until everything is in bits.

HELBIG.

Queiss!

QUEISS.

[*Draws a deep breath.*] Then, lad, then! Now I am quite peaceable. Do you know why?

[HELBIG *shakes his head.*

QUEISS.

Come with me into the stable. I will show you "Dolores." Lad, I tell you, such an animal is wiser and —far, far better than a human being. Spit on them, but above all on the women. Take such a nag by the head. Lad, you will see such a horse's muzzle is softer than a woman's arm And how beautiful they

are, and how sensible and how docile! if, of course, one knows how to go to work with them. And those that don't fall in at once, they are the best of all. They have character. Lad, come into the stable with me.

HELBIG.

[*Half convinced.*] Ay, ay, I'll come with you. What else is there left for me? It is the best thing now. [*With fresh suspicion.*] But first, Queiss, you must tell me one thing more! Honestly! Have you ever noticed anything between Klara and—Lauffen?

QUEISS.

Lauffen? Not that I know of. But why not? A Lieutenant is somebody. But perhaps it's a mere Lancer. We have handsome fellows in the squadron. It's where love falls, even if it be on a lump of manure.

HELBIG.

So you know of nothing? Simply nothing?

QUEISS.

No, lad. Or yes. A while ago I wanted to fetch the Sergeant-Major; they were in the orderly-room. Here.

HELBIG.

How so? I mean, what were they doing?

QUEISS.

Dammit, lad! The orderly-room would not be the right place. She stood here and he yonder.

True, I have riding-boots and spurs on, and they can be heard.

HELBIG.

[*Brooding.*] So then you have found them here?

QUEISS.

That was by chance. Lad, let her go. Spit on the women, lad. Come, I will show you "Dolores."

Enter VOLKHARDT, *in time to hear* QUEISS' *last words.*

VOLKHARDT.

There is time for that yet, Queiss. I will first wish Otto good-day. [*He goes up to* HELBIG *and shakes his hand hard.*] Now, one can at least shake hands with you properly. Welcome home, Otto!

HELBIG.

Good-day, father.

VOLKHARDT.

I suppose you have reported yourself everywhere already?

HELBIG.

Oh, yes, father.

VOLKHARDT.

Regiment, Captain, the two Lieutenants?

HELBIG.

Every one, father.

VOLKHARDT.

That is right. Duty comes first always. [*He sees* QUEISS.] Oh! that's right, Queiss. You wanted the

voucher for the Wallach's. [*He picks out a paper from a heap on the table.*] Here it is.

QUEISS.

Thank you, Sergeant-Major.

[*Goes towards the door.*

VOLKHARDT.

[*Pointing to* HELBIG.] And this man I will send you presently for mid-day stables. Then you can show him "Dolores."

QUEISS.

Very good, Sergeant-Major.

[*Throws* HELBIG *an encouraging glance, then exit.*

VOLKHARDT.

So, Otto, now let one have a proper look at you. Lord knows, you have filled out finely.

HELBIG.

Why, yes, father, it's two years.

VOLKHARDT.

And glad I am that you are here again. We shall have a pleasant time of it again over at our place, eh? [*Clears the papers from the table into a drawer.*] Confound it, lad! Do say something. By-the-bye, I suppose you have seen Klara already?

HELBIG.

Yes. I said good-day to her here. A while ago.

VOLKHARDT.

To be sure; Lieutenant von Lauffen told me the Captain wanted me just then. I say, Otto, the

Lieutenant—he is a man one may be proud of, eh? He will be like his father one day. He has done right well. He will come to something some day. But to be sure, about Klara. How was she?

HELBIG.

How should she have been, father? Of course, as she always was. She was naturally very glad that I was back again.

VOLKHARDT.

Oh! she was very glad? And she "naturally" fell on your neck, eh?

HELBIG.

Well, not exactly that, but——

VOLKHARDT.

Just stop playing. I know well enough that you expected something quite different. Poor chap!

HELBIG.

Dad, I really do not know what you are after. Klara ——

VOLKHARDT.

Silence in the ranks! I know. But this I will say to you, Otto, don't let your head hang down to the ground because of it.

HELBIG.

[*With affected merriment.*] How should I do that, eh, dad?

VOLKHARDT.

[*Nods incredulously at him.*] See now, there is no occasion for it. It's just women's whims. That will

pass over, I tell you. At bottom Klara has remained just the girl she was. [*Half to himself.*] I must know my own girl. I would put my hand in the fire for her. I should not even think about it. No, indeed, I should not think twice about it. I should not hesitate a moment.

[*Outside the call "Shake down fodder" is blown.*

HELBIG.

"Shake down fodder"?

VOLKHARDT.

[*After listening.*] Aye.

HELBIG.

[*As* VOLKHARDT *goes to the door.*] You will not say anything to Klara about it? I mean, as if I had told you?

VOLKHARDT.

No, that would be the stupidest thing that could be. I know her, Otto, I do know her.

[*Without, nailed boots are heard clattering down the stairs and hurrying past the door.*

VOLKHARDT.

Just wait. I only want to put the lazy fellows to a trot. [*He tears the door open.* LANCERS, *all in stable order, are seen rushing past with curricombs and brushes in their hands. A couple come from the opposite direction, carrying full porringers of food.*] Thunder of heaven! What is all this slackness again? Will you make haste and get to the stables? Junghaus, you blasted pig-dog! Right about, quick march! First the horse, then the man! [*Fewer* LANCERS *pass, he*

yells after them.] Ah, there comes friend Michael, of course. Have you seen to your horses? Yours and the Lieutenant's?

[MICHAEL *chews spasmodically and silently shakes his head.*

VOLKHARDT.

Right about, march!

[*He points in the direction from which* MICHAEL *has come.*

MICHAEL.

[*Swallows his mouthful.*] Just eating a lovely bit of meat. So full of fat.

VOLKHARDT.

Just look at the *glutton!* So full of fat! Greedy throttle! Well, take it earlier in your hole, and then——

MICHAEL.

Thanks, Pan* Sergeant-Major! [*Exit quickly.*

[*A couple of stragglers try to rush past.*

VOLKHARDT.

[*Roars after them at the top of his voice.*] Pig-dogs! I shouldn't like to be your horse. [*He bangs the door to, goes back to his table, clears the papers into the drawer, and shuts the box.*] There's a corps for you. Come along, Otto. Head up! I tell you it will all come right.

HELBIG.

[*Following him out.*] Let's hope so.

Curtain.

* "Mister" in Polish.

THE SECOND ACT

SCENE.—LIEUTENANT VON LAUFFEN'S *sitting-room in barracks. Painted a greenish white. In the centre wall the door into the corridor, in the side-wall, right, that of the bedroom, in that to left two windows with striped blinds and threadbare woollen curtains. Between the windows a dressing-table, with a mirror and all sorts of toilet things, cases, bottles, &c. Facing the windows a plain, fair-sized secretaire of oak, with a comfortable writing-chair. By the window a roomy basket-chair with low seat and covered with cushions. Against the centre wall, left of the door, a bookshelf, to the right of door a wardrobe, in the corner the stove. By the main door the regulation brown-painted clothes-stand. Further into the room, the head turned towards the side wall, right, a settee, and within reach a smoker's table. On the walls, pictures representing military and sporting subjects, photographs, an arrangement of sabre, riding-whip, &c., ornamented with cotillion favours.*

On the writing-table burns a lamp with a white shade; the blinds are not down. Discovered MICHAEL, *who is dusting the writing-table carelessly; he is in undress without a cap.*

SPIESS.

[*Comes in with the order-book in his hand.*] There, you old water-rat of a Pole, is the order-book for your Leftenant.

MICHAEL.

[*Very condescendingly.*] That's right. Put it down. On the table.

[SPIESS *lays the book on the writing-table, giving* MICHAEL *a crack on the head in the process, then goes to the smoking-table to help himself to a cigarette.*

MICHAEL.

[*After him like a hawk, and guarding the box.*] Are you mad, Spiess? Drop it, drop it! Leftenant has counted every one.

SPIESS.

Silly oaf, give a couple here. How the devil does the Leftenant know how many there are?

MICHAEL.

He's counted—every one.

SPIESS.

Stupid pig, will you give them here?

[*He tries to get hold of the cigarette-box by force.*

MICHAEL.

[*Makes believes he hears a noise.*] The Leftenant's coming. Quiet, quiet!

[SPIESS *takes alarm and exit hurriedly.*

[MICHAEL *takes, without any disguise, a good lot of cigarettes out of the box and puts them with a grin in the inside pocket of his jacket. He lights one, then goes to the dressing-table, sniffs at one of the bottles, pours something out of it on to his hand and rubs it on his hair. Then he settles cosily on to the settee with his back to the door.*

[LAUFFEN *meanwhile opens the door, letting* HOWEN *pass in.*

MICHAEL.

[*Smoking hard, motions behind him.*] Quiet, quick. Spiess, the Leftenant's coming.

LAUFFEN.

[*Creeps up to him and lands him a heavy swipe with the whip.*] *Is* there already!

[MICHAEL *springs up and stands to attention, rigid with terror.*

LAUFFEN.

[*Calmly.*] Such an impudent swine! The beast lies on my settee and smokes my cigarettes as well!

[*Takes the cigarette out of* MICHAEL'S *mouth and flings it on the ground.*

MICHAEL.

Cigar had fallen—down—in dirt. I thought to myself Pan Lieutenant won't smoke what's fallen in dirt. Thought to myself, Michael will smoke it.

LAUFFEN.

Old son of a pig, you stole it. That's the whole story. [*He gives him another crack and points to the door.*] Down, down! *Allez!*

[MICHAEL *steps quickly past him, but picks up the cigarette all the same.*

HÖWEN.

Stay, Master Michael! First, the soldier's commandment. Article of war, Num-mber II.!

MICHAEL.

[*Growls in his throat.*] "The strict observance of the fealty sworn on attestation is the first duty of the soldier. Next to that, the calling of the soldier demands: readiness for war." [*All this is gabbled.*

HÖWEN.

[*Has several times tried to interrupt him.*] Shut up, my son! [*Threatening a kick.*] Will you get out of this? [*Exit* MICHAEL.

LAUFFEN.

[*During this scene at first very restless, but gets less so.*] Well, now, what was it you wanted, Höwen? The two numbers with Maasminüter and Eulyback, scale 1 to 25,000, eh?

HÖWEN.

Yes. I will send them across to you again to-morrow. [*Seats himself in the basket-chair luxuriously.*]

LAUFFEN.

[*Fishes the two maps out of a drawer in the writing-table and gives them to* HÖWEN.] Oh, there's no hurry—there! [*He walks up and down the room*

restlessly.] By-the-bye, the old man got you by the collar to-day for once. He looked at me so lovingly that I thought, Oh Lord, now he's going to catch hold of you. Well, we know my gentleman : put off——

HOWEN.

[*Yawns.*] Yes, it's a dog's life.

LAUFFEN.

Lord knows, yes. Twenty hours' duty, four hours' sleep, that will be the programme for the day, next. [*He reads the order-book.*] What the old man has put down for to-morrow, again, to be sure! Deuce and all! One does not live in the world merely to fag away at duty. [*He throws the book away.*] I have it, fat, fatter, fattest! Quite true! Fact!

HOWEN.

Hee, hee, ha, ha! Don't make me laugh!

LAUFFEN.

Yes, indeed, man. Quite seriously.

HOWEN.

Get out, sonny!

LAUFFEN.

Quite true! F—— !

HOWEN.

Fact, I know. But if to-morrow morning, about three, there is another alarm, then you will be the first on the spot, and woe to that one of your men

who is not as lively as a trout. And by-and-bye, if yonder a gentleman in red breeches pops up, then you will settle yourself a bit provokingly in the saddle, and you will be alive and quivering all over with lust of battle, and—well, just as if you meant to hurl yourself straight on the daring enemy. To the charge! Squadron, quick march!

LAUFFEN.

[*Chiming in.*] Why, yes, that's the object of the whole performance.

HÖWEN.

And that's why, my son, you please me so much. That's why I am so fond of you.

LAUFFEN.

Thanks, very flattering.

HÖWEN.

Don't mention it. Ah, lad, if I had only a more comfortable chair in my den.

LAUFFEN.

[*Walking up and down again.*] Say, Höwen, will you show me your sketches some time later on?

HÖWEN.

Of course, before bedtime.

LAUFFEN.

It's getting damned well time you did.

HÖWEN.

Oh, it would not be the first night that I have spent this way. No, no, lad, you won't get rid of me quite so soon. I don't let myself be scared away so easily.

LAUFFEN.

Why do you suppose I want you to be?

HÖWEN.

[*Makes a gesture of playful depreciation.*] Silence! But I promise you to get up at once out of this sinfully comfortable chair and vanish, Benjamin my son, if you will confess, first, that you are expecting a visit from a lady——

LAUFFEN.

[*Hurriedly and in alarm.*] Nonsense! Not in the least!

HÖWEN.

Oh yes, you do.

LAUFFEN.

No, really——

HÖWEN.

My lad, you are not one of the people that blush when they are greening. So, secondly, tell me who it is.

LAUFFEN.

No, really, Höwen. You are quite on the wrong scent. Fact. Sure enough.

HÖWEN.

[*Shakes his head incredulously.*] Is it Francoise

Maillard, the charmer from Burgundy? Or Ninon Laporte, who says she comes from Paris? She comes really from Mühlhausen, the child of a respectable weaver—the district policeman showed me her birth certificate. Or is it the fair Bertha of Munich from the Lion tap? In that case I might stay a bit, for they don't shut the show till eleven.

LAUFFEN.

[*Shakes his head, smiling at it all.*] Don't trouble yourself, Höwen. You are altogether and totally on the wrong track.

HÖWEN.

No, no. See now, when we are playing billiards over yonder at the casino or the still more intellectual "Skat," and "tattoo" beats outside—from that time on, sonny, your opponents have won. When I am in it, I have really simply to give myself the frightful trouble to play as inattentively as you—for I don't like to pocket unfair winnings—but at the tattoo—why, lad, there's something behind it. "Half drew she him, half sank he down."

LAUFFEN.

[*Laughing nervously.*] Höwen, you fancy things.

HÖWEN.

Quite so. But I fancy right. See, Lauffen, seriously, I should like to warn you of a danger, a danger which you run.

LAUFFEN.

Is that meant officially? Did the old man set you on?

HÖWEN.

No, no, on the contrary quite as a comrade, and honestly in a friendly spirit, Lauffen. Look now, Lauffen—p'myli'nu—you live here to some extent wall to wall with one of the charmingest girls that walk the earth in our Army Corps District—or trip it rather—I mean old Volkhardt's little daughter.

LAUFFEN.

[*Leans against the window in the dusk, as indifferently as possible.*] Well, and——

HÖWEN.

"Well, and"? That is the danger you run. Lauffen, my boy, I have not heard or seen anything which would give cause for any conjecture. I simply held it my duty as a comrade to warn you—to warn you *in time.*

LAUFFEN.

No; and no reason exists. Not in the least. Fact. Quite true.

HÖWEN.

That really relieves my mind, lad. For, look you, the girl is simply too good for an *amour*, and besides such a thing must not happen to the old Sergeant-Major. Isn't that so?

LAUFFEN.

[*After a short hesitation.*] Yes, of course. Of course.

HÖWEN.

[*After being silent some time.*] You see, lad, any one who is sent here to Sennheim for good, either takes to drinking or turns philosopher. I had no money to drink with, so I took to the tub which others had

drunk empty. I also studied the psychology of the Lieutenant. Such an officer, I said to myself, is given by the State a claim to the respect—well, at least as much as a high official. Consequently he must have duties to correspond. The chief one—to do his work to the utmost—is, unfortunately, less obvious in peace time—less noticeable, I mean. All the more must he be careful not to bring discredit on the power that has given us such great rights. By bad behaviour or the like. We must not attract attention. Self-discipline is in all ways incumbent on us. Even as regards sentimental fits. And how much more as regards passion! We must practise it for the sake of our honour as a caste, that the low journalists outside may find no loophole, not even the least, for breaking in with their nasty jokes, so that the fellows may only dirty themselves if they do abuse us all the same.

LAUFFEN.

[*Constrainedly.*] Yes; yes.

HÖWEN.

You understand me, don't you?

LAUFFEN.

Yes, of course.

HÖWEN.

Well, then. That is what I wanted to say to you.

LAUFFEN.

[*After a pause.*] Thank you, Höwen. [*Hastily.*] But really you may set your mind quite at rest.

HÖWEN.

Good, lad, good. I am glad of it. [*Rises lazily from the chair. In an easier tone.*] So then that's an

end of me, I'm afraid. [*He sings.*] "Then fare thee well, beloved chair." [*Yawns.*] To think I have still the damned sketch-maps to do! [*Pushes the two maps with which he has been playing into his sleeve.*] You have a good time of it. [*Goes to the cigarette box, takes one and lights it over the lamp.*] They are all the same in that way! They all sneak cigarettes. Wladislaw, Michael and Friedrich von Howen. [*Sings from the door.*] "Sleep, sonny, sleep! Thy father peeps." [*Spoken.*] Which Division is it, by-the-bye?"

LAUFFEN.

[*Seeing him out.*] The Forty-first.

HÖWEN.

Of course, the Forty-first. Night, Lauffen!

LAUFFEN.

Night, Höwen!

HÖWEN.

[*Outside.*] Night! [*Exit.*

[LAUFFEN *at first remains by the door. During what follows his internal struggle is to be given eloquent expression. He goes back to the table, slowly takes off his overcoat and hangs it on a hook in the press. Then he puts on his furred lounge coat. He hesitates constantly in doing so. When he has done, takes up a green lamp-shade from the writing-table, and looks long at it. At last he masters himself, and puts the shade resolutely on the lamp. Then he goes hastily to the door and calls in a low tone.*

Michael!

MICHAEL.

[*From without.*] Yes, your honour! [*Enters in his indoor-jacket, holding a riding-boot and blacking-brush.*]

LAUFFEN.

You can go to roost now, Michael. But keep your hole shut, lout! The whole passage stinks of blacking.

MICHAEL.

Very good, sir. [*Wheels about and exit.*

[LAUFFEN *shuts the door, then goes back to the middle of the room and waits, then runs uneasily to the door, opens it, and listens.*

KLARA.

[*Wrapped in a knitted black shawl, flies to his breast.*] Joachim!

LAUFFEN.

Klara! [*They embrace and kiss each other many times.* LAUFFEN *leads* KLARA *to the chair by the writing-table, then goes back to the door and locks it.*

KLARA.

[*Sits down breathing fast and puts off her shawl, then looks about her, and picks up the order-book that has been thrown down. As* LAUFFEN *comes back to her,*] Why, Joachim, that Michael is a regular sloven! He calls that tidying up, and the order-book is lying about on the floor!

LAUFFEN.

[*Standing beside her.*] Nay, pet, don't trouble. I only flung it there a while back.

KLARA.

But what for?

LAUFFEN.

Why, put your little nose into it. [*Pulls the book open, and makes* KLARA *read with him.*] It's simply crazy.

KLARA.

[*Teasingly.*] What is, lad?

LAUFFEN.

[*Frowning, half in earnest.*] Why, the amount of duty that's clapped on one in this place. A man is not a beast of burden.

KLARA.

[*Reads.*] Seven o'clock, continuation of target practice. [*Shakes her head.*] Oh, Lord, oh, Lord. Aye, you have a bad, a very bad time of it! A poor wretched, ill-used beast of burden, that's what you are! Any stonebreaker is better off than you. That's true enough. He is not lugged out of the feathers at two at night. He can have his sleep out. [*She lays the book down, and puts on her shawl playfully.*] Go, boysie, and sleep. Lie right down and be good. I am going directly.

LAUFFEN.

[*Holds her fast as she makes for the door.*] Oh, if you aren't a regular silly girl! [*He looks in her face, they both laugh merrily and kiss each other.*] You silly, you!

KLARA.

[*In his arms.*] Joachim!

LAUFFEN.

[*Moves once or twice backwards and forwards before

her, looking at her silently.] Do you know, little one, that I did not want to put the shade on there just now!

[*He plays with it.* KLARA *looks in silent questioning into his face.*

LAUFFEN.

[*Awkwardly.*] Why, you see—just now—you know, just as I meant to summon you—I thought—I could not help thinking of it. Lord knows, I am quite monstrously happy as soon as I even see you—but you see it occurred to me that really we are doing your father a tremendous wrong.

[KLARA *looks at him steadily.*

Yes, quite a tremendous wrong. Fact. No mistake. See, now, it is quite out of the question that he should approve of our—our secret meetings—and then to my mind, one must also think a little ahead. Everything has an end some time, and——

KLARA.

[*With a calm but decided wave of the hand, interrupts him, then after a brief pause.*] Did you think of that for the first time, just now?

LAUFFEN.

Well, you know, little one, not exactly. I have often shirked the subject before. But then I always purposely put it out of my head again, you know. For whimsies are not for me, I have always felt. I don't like thinking of such things. There is no sense in it.

But just now—why, I could not help thinking seriously about it.

KLARA.

[*Calmly and firmly.*] Well, look here, Joachim. I have thought about it so often that I have long ceased to. I have long since got used to it. [*During* LAUFFEN'S *speeches she has taken the low chair. Now she rests her hands on her knees and goes on speaking, half to herself.*] I have had to do so from the first. God knows, there was a time when I wanted no better than to please my father in everything, and be as he wished in every way. That I tried to act up to till—well, till I simply could not any more. That was when you came, Joachim. I struggled against being fond of you. I tried to escape from myself, and tried to deceive myself. But afterwards the defiance and the unwillingness slowly vanished out of me, and at last—there was nothing more in me that still argued against you. It was as if my whole being was impregnated with longing and love for you, and I thought, "What has such strong hold of you that it quite changes you must also be right for you." Then I began to regard my love for you as my right, as my due, that I should be made happy by you, though it might not seem so to others. And then, Joachim—then I came to you!

[*She rises and goes to him.*

LAUFFEN.

[*Embracing her*] My Klara!

KLARA.

Yes, Joachim, I knew what I did quite clearly and plainly—and if I had not been willing myself, my dear boysie would still be begging for the first kiss.

Eh? But I felt what is there before you is your happiness, perhaps the only one through a whole long life, and then—"though it bends or breaks" I thought, and grasped at it.

LAUFFEN.

Why, lassie! I should not have thought you had let all that pass through your head, and so—so thoroughly fine—I almost think. No, I should not have believed it.

KLARA.

Well, lad, you must live accordingly. One must make some sort of a thing like a plan.

LAUFFEN.

[*Shrugging his shoulders.*] I don't see that. Everything goes awry of itself. And besides, if the wind carries you one way, it carries you that way whether you will or not.

KLARA.

Say, Joachim, if I had not been willing—? But that no doubt. So one is driven from one thing into another.

LAUFFEN.

[*On the alert.*] How so, lassie?

KLARA.

Why, you see, Joachim, Otto Helbig—you know—
[LAUFFEN *shakes his head.*

KLARA.

Otto Helbig, the Corporal, who came home to-day from the Riding School, my foster-brother—See,

now, I was really engaged to him—not properly, you know—and yet—yes, it was as good as fully—he thought we should soon marry.

LAUFFEN.

You and a fellow like that? You are not encouraging, lass! I simply do not understand that. How could you ever think of such a thing. That is quite a mystery to me. No, really! Fact. No nonsense. [*Walks up and down excitedly.*] I suppose the lout has actually tried to take liberties with you?

KLARA.

Lord! How the lad's upon his stilts directly! I should have something to say to that.

LAUFFEN.

Well, it's lucky for him. Else I would let the beggar have it finely.

KLARA.

For shame, Joachim! You would not do that. But, you know, we must be on our guard against Helbig. For—well, how he is disposed to speak of me now, you can pretty well imagine. And he seemed to have some suspicion of you too.

LAUFFEN.

[*Contemptuously.*] Not really? That's right. I am here still. [*Pulling up.*] To be sure—thunder! How if he peached to your father?

KLARA.

That he quite certainly will not do. He promised

me that. Father is not to be brought into it. And I know him so far, what he promises that he will do.

LAUFFEN.

[*Doubtfully.*] H'm, h'm!

KLARA.

Oh, yes, Joachim, if he is only an under-officer. But you will promise me, won't you, that you will not provoke him? On duty, or anyhow?

LAUFFEN.

Double deuce take what I will do. I shall certainly not stop for a fellow like that. I might just as well creep into a mouse-hole at once.

KLARA.

But, Joachim, do not always misunderstand me. I only mean you should be a little on your guard against him. I don't know, I always felt as if he were after us, as if he were hiding somewhere and spying on us. [*She looks about her timidly.*

LAUFFEN.

[*A little infected.*] Lass, you are not very cheerful to-day. You see ghosts, Klara! Fact! Tr——

KLARA.

[*Starts violently.*] Hark! was not that some one near the door?

LAUFFEN.

[*Goes to the door and listens.*] Nonsense, it's guard being relieved.

KLARA.

Yes, it was the relief.

LAUFFEN.

[*Places himself on the settee and draws* KLARA, *who is now standing before him, on to his lap.*] There, you see. Come, lassie. Be good, be sensible.

KLARA.

[*Embraces and kisses him.*] Joachim!

LAUFFEN.

Klara, do be merry. [*Softly.*] Who knows how often we may be together again? What is wrong with you? Do not be gloomy.

KLARA.

[*Springing up.*] I won't be. It is no good. See, Joachim, when I know you are waiting for me I always wish that the time would really fly as fast as I could, and would shove the hand on of our cuckoo-clock over there. And later, when at last the trumpeter has blown the "Last Post," then life really begins for me. All that has bothered me during the day, and which was hateful and irksome, is at an end, and I have nothing before me but joy and happiness—only joy and happiness. And all my being urges me towards you. Everything calls me to you. And I—I must obey. And if father put himself in my way and said, "It will be the death of me"—I must, yet I must go to you. [*She kneels on her knees before* LAUFFEN, *who remains sitting on the sofa.*] Joachim!

LAUFFEN.

[*Gives her a long-drawn kiss.*] Klara! Do you love me as much as that? Do you?

KLARA.

[*Nods, the tears standing in her eyes.*] I do. I would do anything, anything for you. I would sacrifice everything that you might come to no harm, only not you.

LAUFFEN.

[*Shuddering slightly.*] What is there in me that —you love me so?

KLARA.

[*Rises and passes her hand over her forehead.*] Ah, Joachim, in you there is so much that I I love, so much. Really, all that ever seemed to me great and fine in my life. See, ever since I can remember we have lived here, three marches on foot from the frontier. The Magdeburg Lancers are the first on the list if it comes to a tussle. Now— things look quite peaceful. But you, only are here when it's a little shaky about peace! Then— why, you would—— Then there is something in the air, as if a mine were laid somewhere here and the match was already burning. And the people here—all of a sudden they are quite different. It's no longer "Ma'amselle Klärche, plait-il? Like a little cup du café?" They don't bow any more, and it almost looks as if they pitied one beforehand. And with us there is a fine bustle and stir. I know once the saddles lay almost a whole week ready for the field, yes, really ready in the stables. Overnight the section-leaders received ball car-

tridges for every man, and upstairs in the room the dynamite lay ready to carry away, till just in the same way—a wave of the hand ended it all. Ah, Joachim, that was splendid! That was life!

LAUFFEN.

Yes, then. But you know now it would be no different. At the last alarm we were ready to march in forty-seven minutes.

KLARA.

[*Softly.*] Yes, and, Joachim, you have the troop that would have to blow up the railway viaduct at Bas-la-Chapelle over there.

LAUFFEN.

How do you come to know that, Klara? It is the strictest secret. Not a soul knows that, or must know it, that one can get across—that the pass in the Rotenburg is practicable for a raiding party.

KLARA.

Why, when I saw your name in the Mobilisation Schedule, how should I not know what you were told off for? And then I drew father out. I won't tell, dear.

LAUFFEN.

My dearest little girl. Lord, how proud I was when the Colonel gave it to me—me, almost the junior! If I bring that off—well, there will be a nice upside down over there. We reckon thirty-six hours for repairing it, and that's an eternity when minutes matter; and I will bring it off, Klara, or——

[*He whistles softly.*

KLARA.

That is all the same, lad. When you once ride away, you won't come again.

[*She lies down on the settee.*

LAUFFEN.

[*Musing.*] Yes, they would strike me dead in their fury. [*Gaily.*] Well, is there a more irreproachable way of leaving this life than that? At any rate one has been some use so. [*He walks up and down a couple of times thinking.*] And, besides, just as now, I should have enjoyed a happiness, Klara, such as there can be none greater. [*He kneels down before her.*] Dear! Yes, that would be my wish that it should be so! That is how it would have to be.

KLARA.

[*Bends down to him and kisses him passionately.*] Joachim!

LAUFFEN.

That would be best!

KLARA.

Yes, that would be splendid! [*Softly.*] I should know the way I should have to go.

[*Long and ardent embrace.*

LAUFFEN.

Little girl, how beautiful you are!

KLARA.

My boysie!

LAUFFEN.

[*Softly.*] Love me? Yes? [*A low knock.*

[LAUFFEN *springs up.* KLARA *remains sitting motionless. A louder knock.*

LAUFFEN.

[*Straightens himself up and leads* KLARA *cautiously to the door of the bedroom, putting his finger on his lips for silence; after* KLARA *has vanished calls.*] Yes, what is it?

[*No answer, only louder knocking.*

LAUFFEN.

[*Goes to the door and opens,* HELBIG *is seen standing outside.*] Helbig! What do you want so late?

HELBIG.

Excuse me, sir, I beg most respectfully to be allowed to say one word to your honour——

LAUFFEN.

That can wait, can't it? To morrow, Helbig.

HELBIG.

Your honour, just a short word. I beg most respectfully——

LAUFFEN.

[*After a short struggle.*] Come inside.

[HELBIG *enters and stands to attention.*

LAUFFEN.

[*Curtly, but not exactly roughly.*] Well, what do you want, Helbig? But jog along a bit, eh?

HELBIG.

[*Looks heated, seems as if he might also have been drinking.*] Excuse me, your honour—I—I——

LAUFFEN.

Lord in Heaven, do let it off!

HELBIG.

I—I was one time engaged to the daughter of Sergeant-Major Volkhardt over there, to Klara, and—and——

LAUFFEN.

[*Recovering from his first confusion.*] That is very nice and fine, Helbig, but need you have told me that this evening? Man, are you simply forsaken of God and all the heavenly hosts?

HELBIG.

[*Roughly.*] No, no, excuse me, sir, it's more than that. I came back this day from the Riding School to the squadron——

LAUFFEN.

[*Impatiently.*] Well, yes, what then?

HELBIG.

And then—then I find my betrothed suddenly quite different from before——

LAUFFEN.

Helbig! Man alive! Why, I simply don't understand what I can have to do with that. Man, be sensible and get out of the room! You don't seem to know yourself what you want.

HELBIG.

Excuse me, sir, I—I beg most respectfully—will your honour now for once only forget the superior officer and the difference of rank and that? One of us is, so to speak, a man too—and I have come to you, sir, as man to man—and I beg most respectfully—don't make Klara miserable, sir.

LAUFFEN.

Helbig! Now you have gone quite mad!

HELBIG.

No, no, your honour. Just think so—that cannot lead to anything but misery. And not only for Klara. Your honour must think of the father, too! The Sergeant-Major has thirty-three years of honourable service behind him, and your honour could swear his sacred oath he could not bear it if Klara——

LAUFFEN.

Now, I order you, Helbig, shut your mouth and get out of this.

HELBIG.

Excuse me, sir; I am not doing anything wrong. I only ask your honour—I ask him most respectfully

—and I—I really do not want anything for myself. It is only for Klara's sake, your honour—Klara's and the Sergeant-Major's!

LAUFFEN.

[*Points to the door.*] What I told you. Get out of this, and at once!

HELBIG.

[*Stubbornly.*] No, I am not going. [*Changing his tone.*] Yes, yes, I will go at once, sir. But first I must have the assurance that your honour has nothing to do with Klara. I beg most respectfully for that, sir. The assurance that you have nothing to do with Klara. On your word of honour, sir!

LAUFFEN.

Fellow, you are drunk! Off with you!

HELBIG.

[*Fires up angrily, but restrains himself once more.*] Excuse me, your honour, it is so little that I ask of your honour! So blessed little—a word!

LAUFFEN.

Corporal Helbig, I order you, for the last time, leave this room at once!

HELBIG.

[*Drawing himself up with a jerk, bluntly.*] Now I have got it. Klara is here!

[LAUFFEN *looks round involuntarily.*

HELBIG.

She is not over there at her home, that I know. That I know, your honour. So she is here. [*Pointing to the bedroom door.*] There. [*Moves toward the bedroom.*]

LAUFFEN.

[*Catches at his sabre and places himself in his way.*] Move another step, lout!

[*As* HELBIG *moves on defiantly,* LAUFFEN *draws the sabre and deals him a blow on the head with it. The latter, who has raised his hand to shield himself, totters back a couple of steps. Then with a cry of fury, he flings* LAUFFEN *aside, and tears the bedroom door open.*

HELBIG.

[*After one look into the room, laughs harshly.*] Ha, ha!

[*Then he slowly withdraws, walking backwards into the corner of the room, holding his forehead, and half stunned.*

LAUFFEN.

[*Walks past him to the door, with excited steps, in a fury.*] Michael!

MICHAEL.

[*From without.*] Yes, yer honour.

LAUFFEN.

Send the under-officer on duty to me.

MICHAEL.

Very good, sir! [*As he moves away.*] Under-officer on duty.

QUEISS.

[*Soon appears at the door, has his bandolier on as on duty, reports.*] The under-officer on duty.

LAUFFEN.

You, Queiss?

QUEISS.

Yes, sir. Took duty for——

LAUFFEN.

All right. That will do. Take Corporal Helbig to the guard-room.

[QUEISS *casts an astonished glance at* HELBIG, *and hesitates a moment in spite of himself.*

LAUFFEN.

He has been guilty of personal violence to me.

QUEISS.

Very good, sir. [*He goes to* HELBIG *and takes him by the arm.*] Come!

[HELBIG *goes with him quite indifferently, except that from the door he throws back a look at the bedroom door.* QUEISS *starts and looks in the same direction. Then exit, standing to attention.* LAUFFEN *remains with sabre drawn, then slowly drops the weapon.*

Curtain.

THE THIRD ACT

SCENE. *A barrack-room arranged as a Court of Justice. A large, grey-painted apartment. In the central wall a door on which hangs an inventory; in the side wall, right, two windows with striped blinds. Along the left-side wall, right and left of the door, the men's lockers, each with a padlock and a card with the name of the owner. In the left corner an iron stove, with a spittoon in front of it. Before the window stands an oblong table with a plain green stuff cloth upon it. At it are seated, on plain wooden chairs, at the short side with his back to the audience, the* CLERK. *At the long side towards the windows, in this order from the footlights,* CAPTAIN COUNT LEHDENBURG, MAJOR PASCHKE, *the* FIRST COUNCILLOR *of the Military Tribunal, and* SENIOR-LIEUT. HAGERMEISTER, *at the other short side the* SECOND COUNCILLOR. PROSECUTOR *sits to the right and in advance of the* JUDGES' *table near the central wall at a smaller table. The accused,* HELBIG, *a little to the left in the foreground on a stool. A little behind him, also at a small table,* LIEUT. VON HÖWEN, *as prisoner's friend. Two chairs are placed for the witnesses a little in front of the plaintiff's and prisoner's places, but are not used.*

The military men are all in Orderly uniform, the officers in overcoats without sashes or bandoliers. Their helmets, &c., are laid aside. The prisoner appears in full uniform, but without his sword. [*During the hearing the* ORDERLY CORPORAL *stands at the door.*]

Bright noontide.

The proceedings are interrupted. The CLERK *writes up his statement; besides him only the* SECOND COUNCILLOR *still sits at the table rocking his chair. The complainant stands turning over his papers.* PASCHKE, HAGERMEISTER, *and the* FIRST COUNCILLOR *stand chatting at the window, watching* LEHDENBURG.

PASCHKE.

[*To the* CLERK.] I beg of you, my dear sir, go and see outside how things stand with the prisoner. We must really bring the proceedings to a close.

CLERK.

Very good, sir. [*Exit.*

LEHDENBURG.

[*Walks round the room with a spray, sprinkling lavender water, concluding a conversation.*] With all due respect, sir, there's a frantic difference between the smell of a private in the open and in a closed room. My squadron of Cuirassiers on a high road—I ride, of course to leeward—smells. It's the savour of our profession. Soldier in quarters stinks. Always. Frightfully.

HAGERMEISTER.

But still more dreadful is this dreadful, damp smell of scrubbing. The boards are still reeking of moisture.

PASCHKE.

And they are dirty all the same.

LEHDENBURG.

Quite right. *Sudor humanus* mixed with soft soap. Weaker nerves than ours would unquestionably have broken down among the surroundings. It is a shame that cries to heaven to keep us so long without a proper place! [*Turns to* FIRST COUNCILLOR.] And the Court has been again refused for this year, has it not, Mr. Councillor? Really, it is quite incomprehensible to me.

FIRST COUNCILLOR.

It is expected to come next year, Count. For this year the Reichstag has struck it out.

LEHDENBURG.

Crazy creatures there! They should sit here for once and try cases. To be sure they have given themselves a fine show. Others must stifle. But the dining is not good there. Have you ever dined at the Reichstag, Major?

PASCHKE.

[*Curtly.*] No.

LEHDENBURG.

Interesting. Really and truly. Table next me sat Bebel. Drank small Pilsner and ate rolls. Quite decently with knife and fork. Rolls and cooked ham. Really interesting. But dinner not eatable.

PASCHKE.

[*Turns and coldly says.*] Really!

[*Moves away with* FIRST COUNCILLOR *to the window.*

LEHDENBURG.

[*To* HAGERMEISTER, *snubbed.*] Not a very communicative gentleman, Mister Paschke. Have been trying to lug something out of him, but it's no good.

[HAGERMEISTER *shrugs his shoulders.*

LEHDENBURG.

Well, of course, they have a hard time of it, those gentry. Fancy, it's not easy to hit with a murderous sort of thing like a cannon; makes the blood sluggish. Well, I have no great liking for sounding notes of woe and putting on the stern face of a judge here. Have as it is missed a perfect bit of hunting. It came very hard on me.

HAGERMEISTER.

Can you ride your "Missis Page" again, Count?

LEHDENBURG.

Now the murder is out. How do you know, my dear sir, that I have a "Missis Page"? To be sure, she is on her legs again.

HAGERMEISTER.

I saw a picture of you and the nag in the *Week*, Count.

LEHDENBURG.

[*With a laugh.*] My very dear sir, it is "Missis Page" certainly, but do you know who it is on her?

HAGERMEISTER

Why you, Count.

LEHDENBURG.

Trooper Carl Abromeit, of the Cuirassiers, from Naugeningken, my excellent batman. [*He takes* HAGERMEISTER'S *arm confidentially.*] You see, my dear sir, the *Week* is a very decent paper, even H.M. often in it, but just suppose some one—little Mina Meyer, if you like—sees the picture. She says, "I say, Else, that's not my idea of Count Lehdenburg." Wouldn't it be unpleasant for me? But as it is—how can it touch me?

Enter a VOLUNTEER ASSISTANT SURGEON, *followed by the* CLERK.

SURGEON.

[*Reports.*] Beg respectfully to report, Corporal Helbig is in a state to be further examined.

PASCHKE.

Thanks, doctor. What was the matter with him?

SURGEON.

Simple fit of weakness, Major, fainting, perhaps due to the excitement of the trial. And, besides, the Inspector of the Lock-up reports that for some days he has obstinately refused to take nourishment.

PASCHKE.

Really! And now?

SURGEON.

He has had a cup of beef tea and a sup of wine. That will, I think, be enough for the present.

PASCHKE.

So then we can resume the proceedings.

SURGEON.

I think so, sir.

PASCHKE.

[*Looks towards the door.*] Well, we will give the poor devil a few minutes more. Thanks, doctor.

[*Exit* SURGEON *with a bow.*

PASCHKE.

A strange fellow, this Helbig! Eaten nothing. And yet the case seems quite clear.

LEHDENBURG.

That it is. Don't understand circumstances at all. All these witnesses to character! One, if you like—but that's enough. Only makes too much of the whole business. The *Berliner Tageblatt* and the other Social Democratist low papers will be haranguing again about the intolerable military burdens. Can't blame 'em for once. And who does it come on? Next year the Reichstag will again strike out our Court Buildings.

PASCHKE.

[*Between anger and amusement.*] Then you will probably be no longer a member, Captain?

LEHDENBURG.

Humbly beg pardon, Major, it's the feeling of comradeship and solidarity in me. [*Blows his nose and shudders.*] Devil take it, it's no great delight to

act as representative here of superior divine justice. The last time—you know, Major—affair of the probationer Paymaster and the little crazy barmaid—a love tragedy or the bloody scene in the dark back room—was interesting at any rate. But to-day?

SECOND COUNCILLOR.

[*From the table.*] We are not at the end of everything yet, Count.

LEHDENBURG.

Oh, my own, just look at that! Our fatty can talk! [*Goes to the table and pats the* COUNCILLOR *on the stomach.*

PASCHKE.

[*Interposing pretty brusquely.*] Had we not better resume? [*Signs to the* CLERK.

CLERK.

[*Goes to the door and calls through it.*] The proceedings will now continue.

PASCHKE.

Well, are you half on your legs again, Corporal Helbig?

HELBIG.

Yes, sir.

PASCHKE.

Good. But, Orderly, just put a glass of water for Helbig on the table there, all the same.

ORDERLY.

I have no glasses for prisoners, sir,

PASCHKE.

Then take one of these here.

[*Points to those on the* JUDGES' *table.*

ORDERLY.

Those are for the Judges, sir.

PASCHKE.

Lord! that makes no difference.

ORDERLY.

Excuse me, sir, it says in my instructions: "On the Judges' table stands a water-bottle, filled, with five glasses."

LEHDENBURG.

[*Flashing out.*] Man, you're an [*calming down*] exceptionally excellent official!

PASCHKE.

[*Sternly.*] Orderly, I order you to put a glass of water for Corporal Helbig.

ORDERLY.

Very good, sir. [*Does so.*

PASCHKE.

[*After they all have taken their places as described in the directions at the beginning of the act.*] We will now continue the proceedings. [*To* FIRST COUNCILLOR.] If you please, Mr. Councillor.

FIRST COUNCILLOR.

[*After clearing his throat.*] Prisoner, do you abide

by the account that you gave before the proceedings were interrupted?

HELBIG.

[*Looks pale and worn.*] Yes.

FIRST COUNCILLOR.

Then on that evening you were in an excited condition—but not drunk?

HELBIG.

No. I had drunk a couple of glasses of beer, but I knew what I was doing.

FIRST COUNCILLOR.

Well, you made a noise in the passage, Lieutenant von Lauffen reproved you, you answered, and at last you forgot yourself so far as to attack your superior officer?

HELBIG.

Yes.

FIRST COUNCILLOR.

And you have nothing to add to this?

HELBIG.

No.

PASCHKE.

[*With a polite gesture requesting silence to the* COUNCILLOR.] Helbig, I will once more point out to you that you are doing yourself harm by your stubborn demeanour here. Helbig, keep nothing back from your Judges. Perhaps there is something that might plead in your favour. Helbig! There is yet time!

[HELBIG *is silent.*

HÖWEN.

[*Softly.*] Helbig, man, don't be so mulish. Speak! You are just condemning yourself.

PASCHKE.

Then you have nothing to add to your statement?

HELBIG.

[*Much agitated, but at last replies firmly.*] No, sir.
[PASCHKE *shrugs his shoulders.*

FIRST COUNCILLOR.

Then we will proceed to hear witnesses. [*To* ORDERLY.] Ask Lieutenant von Lauffen to come into Court.

ORDERLY.

[*Looks carefully down the list through his glasses, opens the door, and calls through it.*] Lieutenant von Lauffen, will you be so good?

Enter LAUFFEN.

FIRST COUNCILLOR.

Witness, you are Lieutenant Joachim von Lauffen, Lieutenant in the King's Magdeburg Regiment of Lancers, the 25th, born January 7, 1881, at Strasburg in Alsace?

LAUFFEN.

[*Guardedly.*] Yes.

COUNCILLOR.

You are not related by blood or marriage to the prisoner Helbig?

LAUFFEN.

No.

COUNCILLOR.

Will you please tell us about your encounter with the prisoner on the night of the 12th of August of the current year.

LAUFFEN.

[*Hastily.*] Very good. Well, I was just going to bed when something tapped or knocked at my door. I went and opened. Corporal Helbig was outside. I asked him what he wanted so late. He answered in a confused way. At last I brought him in, because I did not want to have a scene in the corridor at night. There I brought him to book, and he had something to say about it. And then—then he became—then he forgot himself. And I called the under-officer on duty and had him taken away.

COUNCILLOR.

Very well, Lieutenant. Only, it would be very desirable if you would enter somewhat more into details. For instance, what did Helbig answer you when you called him to account for the knocking or banging?

LAUFFEN.

That—that I don't remember. It was all sorts of silly, confused stuff, if I remember right. At any rate, quite unimportant, quite. Fact. No mistake. Else I should have noticed it.

COUNCILLOR.

But he seemed to you to be excited?

LAUFFEN.

Yes, that he did.

COUNCILLOR.

Perhaps drunk as well?

LAUFFEN.

That may be. At any rate, not stupidly so. Only it's certain that he was exceptionally excited. Very excited, almost feverishly. His behaviour and his attack—gave me rather the idea of a sudden—delusion. That's it—of a sudden delusion. And perhaps—I am—I feel bound to say so perhaps, after all, I am partly to blame in the matter. I was out of temper that evening - yes, tremendously out of temper, and treated the Corporal frightfully roughly at once, beastly so. Really quite without reason. That I grant at once. I suppose that must have provoked him, and—— and altogether I have often reproached myself for using my sword. But, as I said, I was very out of temper, hideously so, as so often happens. And, in any case, I would request—most respectfully, that the Corporal, if it is possible, may be allowed all extenuating circumstances. [*He stops as he sees the* JUDGES *looking at each other in astonishment, then presently*]—Yes, that I would most earnestly, and, of course, most respectfully beg.

FIRST COUNCILLOR.

[*After a long silence.*] H'm. And you give us no other details?

LAUFFEN.

No.

[*A pause.*]

FIRST COUNCILLOR.

[*To the* ASSESSORS, *hesitatingly.*] Then I suppose we can proceed to put the witness on his oath?

[LAUFFEN *shows alarm.*

HÖWEN.

[*With a bow to* PASCHKE, *asking for a hearing.*] I am forced to declare that in the testimony of the Lieutenant, and in the same place there is—a gap just where Corporal Helbig professes to have suddenly lost all recollection. That, to my thinking, is—a more than remarkable coincidence, and I consider it my duty, as prisoner's friend, to insist on its being cleared up. I therefore respectfully beg that the witness may be once more questioned in this direction—most searchingly, I beg.

PASCHKE.

Very well, Lieutenant von Höwen. H'm, Lieutenant von Lauffen, I too wanted to address a word or two to you before you are sworn. I should like to remind you that according to the form, you swear not to conceal anything that you know. Therefore, Lieutenant, I call on you, in discharge of my duty as a conscientious Judge, and I beg you from my heart, Lieutenant, as your comrade and senior—examine yourself once more to the innermost of your thoughts before you take the oath.

LAUFFEN.

[*Dully.*] Very well.

PASCHKE.

Have you nothing to add to your statement?

[LAUFFEN *is silent.*

[*A long, anxious pause.*]

COUNCILLOR.

Then we will proceed to swear the witnesses.

[*He rises and reaches for his helmet, the others do the same.*

LEHDENBURG.

[*In a clear, trumpet-like voice.*] Eh, hem—with all due respect, Major, would it not be advisable to postpone for the present the swearing of Lieutenant von Lauflen until that honourable witness has once more examined himself, and in the meantime have the other witnesses?

PASCHKE.

[*To* FIRST COUNCILLOR.] I do not know whether that is admissible as a matter of procedure.

FIRST COUNCILLOR.

[*After a short consideration.*] Yes, it is that. There would be nothing to prevent it. Have the prisoner's friend or the accuser any objection to make?

HÖWEN AND THIRD COUNCILLOR.

No.

FIRST COUNCILLOR.

Lieutenant von Lauffen, your being sworn is postponed. We shall ask you later to repeat your statement—and, in certain respects, to complete it.

LAUFFEN.

[*Hoarsely.*] Yours to command. May I go?

PASCHKE.

As you please, Lieutenant.

FIRST COUNCILLOR

I would ask you to remain. We might have to ask questions in the course of further taking of evidence.

LAUFFEN.

Very well. [*Retires up to left.*

COUNCILLOR.

[*To* ORDERLY.] Trooper Michael.

ORDERLY.

[*As above calls through door.*] Trooper Michael.

Enter MICHAEL.

FIRST COUNCILLOR.

Witness, you are batman Wladislaw Michael, at present trooper in the 3rd squadron of the 25th Magdeburg Lancer Regiment?

MICHAEL.

[*Is pushed forward reluctantly by the* ORDERLY, *always nervously at attention.*] If you please, Major.

COUNCILLOR.

Born February 27, 1882, at Lekno.

MICHAEL.

If you please, Major.

PASCHKE.

[*Gently admonishing.*] Michael, you should say *Mr.* Councillor.

MICHAEL.

Please, Major.

PASCHKE.

What, again? Mr. Coun-cil-lor.

MICHAEL.

If please, Mr. Counc——

PASCHKE.

[*Disheartened.*] Well, let be.

FIRST COUNCILLOR.

Trooper Michael, are you related to the prisoner there, Corporal Helbig, by blood or marriage?

MICHAEL.

If please, Major. [*Astonishment at the* JUDGES' *table.*]

COUNCILLOR.

[*To* JUDGES.] That seems scarcely credible. Helbig was born at Halberstadt; his mother's name also sounds thoroughly German. [*To* MICHAEL.] Are you really related to Corporal Helbig?

MICHAEL.

If please, Major.

COUNCILLOR.

In what way?

[MICHAEL *makes no reply.*

COUNCILLOR.

Lord, you can surely tell me how you are related to the prisoner?

MICHAEL.

Certainly, Major.

COUNCILLOR.

Then tell me, please.

[MICHAEL *is silent, and almost dies of alarm.*

LEHDENBURG.

Oh, you heavy-headed lout!

COUNCILLOR.

I almost think we ought to employ an interpreter.

[PASCHKE *shrugs his shoulders helplessly.*

LEHDENBURG.

Beg pardon, Major, may I have a try?

PASCHKE.

Why, of course, Captain.

LEHDENBURG.

Moj maly Wladek, nie boj sie. (Wladek, my lad, don't be afraid.) Is Corporal Helbig uncle yours? Or cousin? Siostrzeniec. (Countryman.)

MICHAEL.

[*Briskly.*] No, Captain.

LEHDENBURG.

Or, my little Wladislaus, has sister of yours married man that's called Helbig?

MICHAEL.

Have no sister, only have brothers.

LEHDENBURG.

Well, that's just the whole business. Is Pan Sergeant in any way—*wogóle*—one of your relations?

MICHAEL.

Haven't such high relatives, Captain.

LEHDENBURG.

[*With a gesture to the Court.*] There now!

PASCHKE.

The man seems to me a bit weak in the nut. What is he to give evidence about?

COUNCILLOR.

Lieutenant von Lauffen sent him to fetch the under-officer on duty. He did not set foot in the room at all. He neither saw nor heard anything, besides.

PASCHKE.

I think we may do without this witness.

COUNCILLOR.

I think so too. [*The others assent.*] You can go, Michael.

MICHAEL.

If please, Major.

[*Some by-play between* LEHDENBURG *and him. He wheels about stiffly and goes towards the door. Before going off casts a sheepish look at* LEHDENBURG, *who waves jocosely to him.*

PASCHKE.

You have made a conquest there, Count.

LEHDENBURG.

Yes, indeed. Count Bülow will thank me for it. Practical policy for Poland without touching the Settlers' Fund. Prize solution of the riddle.

COUNCILLOR.

[*To* ORDERLY.] Sergeant-Major Volkhardt.

ORDERLY.

[*Calls through door.*] Sergeant-Major Volkhardt!

VOLKHARDT *enters and stands to attention.*

COUNCILLOR.

Sergeant-Major Volkhardt!

VOLKHARDT.

[*Comes forward.*] Here!

COUNCILLOR.

Witness, you are Sergeant-Major Friedrich Volkhardt, born April 20, 1850, at Magdeburg?

VOLKHARDT.

Yes, Mr. Councillor.

COUNCILLOR.

You are in no way related to the prisoner Helbig?

VOLKHARDT.

No, that I am not, sir. But he was brought up i

my house from the age of twelve, when his father, my old comrade, died.

PASCHKE.

Excuse me, Mr. Councillor. Sergeant-Major, do stir up. Forget for the moment that you are before superiors. We are Judges in the first place, and you a witness.

VOLKHARDT.

[*Bristles up.*] Very well, sir.

COUNCILLOR.

But there has been no formal adoption?

VOLKHARDT.

No, sir.

COUNCILLOR.

Then there is no reason why you should decline to give evidence?

VOLKHARDT.

I am at your orders.

COUNCILLOR.

At the entertainment on his return given to Helbig, on the evening of the 12th of August, you sat beside the prisoner?

VOLKHARDT.

I did, sir.

COUNCILLOR.

Did anything strike you at that time about your neighbour?

VOLKHARDT.

Nothing extraordinary. Perhaps he was a little quieter than usual.

COUNCILLOR.

But not excited?

VOLKHARDT.

No.

COUNCILLOR.

Can you say whether the prisoner drank much at that time, or very rapidly?

VOLKHARDT.

I did not notice anything at all. To be sure, at first one always drinks rather fast.

COUNCILLOR.

About how many glasses should you say?

VOLKHARDT.

Well, it might have been four or five, or at most six glasses.

COUNCILLOR.

The prisoner could not have got drunk on that, could he?

VOLKHARDT.

Scarcely, I should say, sir.

COUNCILLOR.

Good. [*He turns over his papers.*

LEHDENBURG.

I beg humbly pardon, sir. Should like respectfully to inquire whether the prisoner had had anything proper to eat beforehand. Am convinced six

glasses of beer on an empty stomach would cause total drunkenness. Have had disastrous experience myself.

PASCHKE.

[*Impatiently.*] Oh certainly, Captain. Mr. Councillor, pray——

COUNCILLOR.

Well, had the prisoner eaten beforehand or not?

VOLKHARDT.

No, I scolded him about it.

LEHDENBURG.

Voilà! Consider it established beyond question. Corporal Helbig, when he committed the act, had got a proper skinful.

THIRD COUNCILLOR.

Perhaps, Count. But, according to our military code, drunkenness is no extenuating circumstance.

LEHDENBURG.

Thanks for very kind instruction. Was of course well aware of the fact. All the same, is interesting to know—for Judges and the like.

FIRST COUNCILLOR.

Sergeant-Major Volkhardt, what sort of a man do you consider the prisoner to be? As regards character, I mean.

VOLKHARDT.

A quiet, steady, frank and honourable man.

COUNCILLOR.

You have not known him to be given to violence?

VOLKHARDT.

No, never.

COUNCILLOR.

Can you explain to yourself how he suddenly let himself be led away into this attack on Lieutenant von Lauffen?

VOLKHARDT.

No, sir; I cannot at all.

COUNCILLOR.

And you know nothing of a possible hidden reason for the attack?

VOLKHARDT.

No.

COUNCILLOR.

I mean, whether there were strained relations, or anything between the Lieutenant and the prisoner?

VOLKHARDT.

Excuse me, sir, there can be no question of that between an officer and an under-officer.

COUNCILLOR.

Of course not. I only mean, Corporal Helbig might have been at some time treated in a way which, say even wrongly, he felt to be unjust.

VOLKHARDT.

No, certainly not.

COUNCILLOR.

Or he might from private and quite natural reasons have taken a hatred to the Lieutenant?

VOLKHARDT.

[*Starts.*] From private reasons?

COUNCILLOR.

Well, Sergeant-Major, you hesitate? Speak right out, sir.

VOLKHARDT.

Very good, sir. But I really know nothing I could allege.

COUNCILLOR.

But when I asked you, you started, didn't you?

VOLKHARDT.

Yes, Mr. Councillor. I—I myself have been put quite wrong in the head by this affair. First, Helbig, my boy, as I may call him, goes and does a thing like this, and I cannot for the life of me understand why or how—and then, when you, sir, asked me about private reasons which might account for it, I—I could not help—— But that is quite out of place here, sir.

COUNCILLOR.

Only speak out, Sergeant-Major. One can never know beforehand whether a thing has not some connection with the case under consideration.

VOLKHARDT.

You will excuse me, sir—what I mean hardly could.

COUNCILLOR.

Sergeant-Major, speak all the same.

VOLKHARDT.

Well, it merely occurred to me that my daughter at home—takes a very particular interest in the proceedings. She keeps on asking questions about this and that—and at what time the proceedings would begin, whether she might not be there, and whether all the witnesses had to be sworn, and that—such a lot of nonsense, that at last I forbade her to speak. And then she grew quite excited, and declared she *must* be at the trial, at all costs, and so on. That was what occurred to me just now.

COUNCILLOR.

Really? And had your daughter any reason for being so excited?

VOLKHARDT.

Why, yes, if you come to that. She was at one time half engaged to Helbig.

COUNCILLOR.

Then there is nothing extraordinary about it if the girl is excited. In any case it is scarcely conceivable, is it, that your daughter could have anything to do with the quarrel between Lieutenant von Lauffen and Helbig?

VOLKHARDT.

[*Emphatically.*] Oh, no. How could it? It is quite impossible.

COUNCILLOR.

What do you say, prisoner?

HELBIG.

[*Gloomily, with a touch of scorn.*] Certainly, Mr. Councillor.

HÖWEN.

I respectfully request that the Lieutenant may also be questioned on the point.

COUNCILLOR.

If you desire it, certainly. True, I don't know what purpose it can serve——

[VOLKHARDT *becomes on the alert, and looks inquiringly at* HÖWEN.

HÖWEN.

I respectfully beg you to do so.

COUNCILLOR.

Very well. Will you be so good, Lieutenant von Lauffen, to speak on the point?

LAUFFEN.

[*Very hastily.*] As you please. There—there can naturally be no question of that, no question.

COUNCILLOR.

Thank you, Lieutenant. It is as I supposed. The girl is simply concerned as to what will happen to her betrothed.

VOLKHARDT.

Excuse me, sir, but Helbig is no longer her betrothed.

COUNCILLOR.

[*Jocosely.*] Well, well. Old love does not die.

You see now, Sergeant-Major, how the matter stands?

VOLKHARDT.

To be sure, sir. That must be how it is.

COUNCILLOR.

Very good. And if any information should be wanted from your daughter, she can easily be fetched across, can't she?

VOLKHARDT.

Certainly, sir. My quarters are close at hand.

COUNCILLOR.

Quite so. We will postpone your being sworn, Sergeant-Major, till you are summoned later on as a witness to character. [*To the* ORDERLY.] Corporal Queiss!

ORDERLY.

[*As above, calls through door.*] Corporal Queiss!

[*After his entrance looks out once more and leaves the room amid signs of angry astonishment.*

Enter QUEISS, *who stands to attention.*

COUNCILLOR.

Corporal Johannes Queiss?

QUEISS.

Here!

COUNCILLOR.

You were born on October 2, 1870, at Brandenburg on the Havel?

QUEISS.

Yes, sir.

COUNCILLOR.

Not related to the prisoner either by blood or marriage?

QUEISS.

Neither of them.

COUNCILLOR.

On the evening of the 12th August you were under-officer on duty in the barracks of the Third Squadron?

QUEISS.

Yes, sir.

COUNCILLOR.

Tell us how you were sent for, and so on.

QUEISS.

I was in my room. Then I heard Lieutenant von Lauffen call for the under-officer on duty. I went at once to his room. On the way I met Trooper Michael. He was sent to fetch me. I shut him into the servant's room——

COUNCILLOR.

Why?

QUEISS.

There might be something or other wrong, and there was no occasion for him to hear when I was told so.

COUNCILLOR.

Well. Go on!

QUEISS.

The door into the Lieutenant's room stood wide

open. I reported my presence, and then Lieutenant von Lauffen ordered me to take Helbig to arrest. He—Helbig, of course—had, he said, made an attack on him.

COUNCILLOR.

You heard nothing of the dispute that went before.

QUEISS.

No.

COUNCILLOR.

And on the way to the lock-up he said nothing either?

QUEISS.

No.

COUNCILLOR.

Good. [*To the Court.*] So there we are at the same place again. [*To* VOLKHARDT *and* QUEISS.] Volkhardt and Queiss, I ask you again, can you, apart from what you have already stated, give no information which might serve to account for the conduct of the prisoner on the evening in question?

VOLKHARDT AND QUEISS.

[*With one voice.*] No, Mr. Councillor.

COUNCILLOR.

And you can make no conjecture about it either? No matter what sort?

VOLKHARDT.

No, sir.

[QUEISS *makes no reply.*

COUNCILLOR.

Well, Queiss?

QUEISS.

[*After a sullen pause.*] When I got the order from Lieutenant von Lauffen to arrest Helbig, I thought I heard a noise in the Lieutenant's room, and when I took Helbig away he looked up only once—and that was towards the room door.

COUNCILLOR.

Well?

QUEISS.

I suppose there must have been some one in the room.

COUNCILLOR.

And who should there be there?

QUEISS.

A lady! [*Sensation among the* JUDGES.

LEHDENBURG.

[*Out loud.*] Aha!

COUNCILLOR.

[*To* QUEISS.] So it was a lady to your thinking?

VOLKHARDT.

[*Gives out a low, respectful laugh and shakes his head; in an undertone.*] Why, really!

COUNCILLOR.

Volkhardt, you have something to say?

VOLKHARDT.

If you please, Mr. Councillor. Queiss, you must know—he's our best under-officer, I believe, that is in our Army Corps, and perhaps even in the whole Army there is not another such a good horseman, and as for horse-mastership, that's where he knows all about it——

COUNCILLOR.

[*Impatiently.*] Yes, yes, Sergeant-Major. That's very possible.

VOLKHARDT.

Excuse me, sir, but it's so—but as for women, he cannot bear them. It's like holding a red rag to a bull, and where there's anything that's not nice, according to him, there is always a woman behind it.

LEHDENBURG.

The man interests me wonderfully.

PASCHKE.

[*Reprovingly.*] Really I must beg of you, Captain. Right, Volkhardt! We will not believe your subordinate out of hand. Anyhow, we are bound to follow this hint.

[*He motions to the* COUNCILLOR *to continue the hearing.*

COUNCILLOR.

[*Smiling with an air of superiority.*] Queiss, did you notice anything else which pointed to there being a woman in the bedroom?

QUEISS.

No, nothing else.

COUNCILLOR.

But the rustle that you say you heard—that may have come from outside just as well, may it not? From the passage, or the adjoining room? Barrack-rooms are mostly thin enough.

QUEISS.

That is certainly possible, but the rustling was not the main thing. When afterwards Helbig looked towards the door—it was that that put me on to it.

COUNCILLOR.

Corporal Queiss, I must draw your attention to the fact that you stand here as a witness. Therefore you must not put forward statements in the air for which you have not the smallest proofs. You cannot even say why and how you arrived at your conjectures!

QUEISS.

And I have seen once before a lady coming out of Lieutenant von Lauffen's rooms.

COUNCILLOR.

Oh! When was that?

QUEISS.

Early in June; about two in the morning. I can tell you exactly if I look in the stable-book. It was when "Andromeda" broke her right shoulder.

COUNCILLOR.

Oh! And who was it that time?

QUEISS.

That I don't know.

COUNCILLOR.

I suppose you saw the lady?

QUEISS.

Oh, yes. It was a white figure that flitted round the corner at the other end of the passage, and then she was gone.

LEHDENBURG.

Unquestionably the "White Lady of Berlin Castle." She travels sometimes.

COUNCILLOR.

Well, Queiss, that a grown person cannot suddenly "be gone" is very clear. And there are no ghosts either, eh?

QUEISS.

No, I don't believe in them.

COUNCILLOR.

And a barrack, I suppose, is fastened and locked up everywhere at night-time?

QUEISS.

Yes, certainly; at least it ought to be.

COUNCILLOR.

Then it is clearly and plainly impossible that anybody should suddenly be gone. [*Sarcastically.*] And the white lady came out of the Lieutenant's room?

QUEISS.

Oh, yes, that I saw distinctly, as I do your honour now.

COUNCILLOR.

And did you not follow her up?

QUEISS.

No, I heard just at the time two horses biting each other in the stable, and the stable sentry must have been asleep, so I ran to the stable.

COUNCILLOR.

That seemed more important to you.

QUEISS.

Yes, certainly.

LEHDENBURG.

Wonderfully remarkable man!

QUEISS.

But afterwards I searched everywhere.

COUNCILLOR.

And found nothing?

QUEISS.

Nothing?

COUNCILLOR.

Then you must see that you were mistaken. You let yourself be deceived by the moonlight.

QUEISS.

The moon was not shining that night.

COUNCILLOR.

[*Angrily.*] Or you dreamed the deuce knows what. In any case you don't mean seriously to maintain that that can have anything to do with the case in which Corporal Helbig is mixed up? He was at the Riding School then, wasn't he?

QUEISS.

I know that, sir.

LEHDENBURG.

May I be allowed—one question? Do any women live in the part of the barracks which is in question?

[QUEISS *is startled, makes no reply, but casts a troubled look at* VOLKHARDT.

VOLKHARDT.

If you please, Captain, my quarters are in that part, and my daughter, of course, lives with me.

LEHDENBURG.

[*Thoughtfully.*] Oh! That is all I wanted to know. Thank you, Sergeant-Major Volkhardt.

COUNCILLOR.

Well, Queiss, now you see, don't you, that you must have somehow made a mistake?

QUEISS.

[*Shrugging his shoulders.*] But that is always the way, if a decent fellow gets into trouble it is always a woman that's to blame for it.

COUNCILLOR.

[*Reprovingly.*] That's nonsense, Queiss.

LEHDENBERG.

Thorough-paced misogyny.

PASCHKE.

Why, yes, it seems to me to be a sort of monomania. All the same—Helbig, tell us now, was a girl in question at the time of the quarrel?

HELBIG.

[*Excitedly.*] No, no!

PASCHKE.

[*Warningly.*] Helbig!

HELBIG.

[*Distracted.*] I will say nothing more.
[*He sinks back in exhaustion.*

[*Pause.*]

PASCHKE.

Lieutenant von Lauffen, will you please speak on the point?

LAUFFEN.

[*Alarmed, struggles with himself; after a painful pause.*] Corporal Queiss is totally mistaken.

PASCHKE.

H'm, h'm. Lieutenant von Lauffen, I will refrain from again reminding you of the seriousness of the oath which you will presently have to take. But the

statement of this witness, Corporal Queiss, has come on us all as a surprise; and if there should be even a grain of truth in this surmise of his, then much would be accounted for which was obscure before. Lieutenant von Lauffen, further back you asked directly that extenuating circumstances might be considered in favour of the prisoner. Well, a question of passion, a jealous outburst—these would undoubtedly form such an extenuating circumstance, though, of course, it would not wipe away the offence that Helbig has committed. Is the prisoner to be deprived of this advantage?

[*A heavy pause.*]

LAUFFEN.

[*Perturbed.*] I—I have nothing to add to my statement. [PASCHKE *resumes his seat, shrugging his shoulders.*

[*A long pause.*]

COUNCILLOR.

[*In quiet warning.*] You will have to swear to your statement directly, Lieutenant von Lauffen.

LAUFFEN.

[*Blankly.*] Very well.

[*A long, oppressive pause, during which the* COUNCILLOR *plays nervously with his papers.*

HÖWEN.

[*Hoarsely, clearing his throat.*] Eh—hem! I beg to submit that the state of the case has by no means been cleared up by the evidence so far given. On the other hand, the statements of Corporal Queiss, and

Sergeant-Major Volkhardt told us before that, seem very much worth notice. Therefore I most respectfully propose that we call on Fräulein Volkhardt, the Sergeant-Major's daughter, to attend, and question her. And that—even if it should only lead to a negative result.

[*Alarm and silence.* VOLKHARDT *shrinks visibly.*

LEHDENBURG.

[*Decidedly.*] I am decidedly in favour of the proposal being adopted.

HAGERMEISTER.

[*Warmly.*] I beg respectfully to declare myself of the same opinion as the Captain.

PASCHKE.

I am of the same opinion too.

[SECOND *and* THIRD COUNCILLORS *bow in token of assent.*

FIRST COUNCILLOR.

Certainly. Is the request to be proffered immediately?

PASCHKE.

Of course. The quarters of the Third Squadron are scarcely five hundred paces away. Orderly! Where is the Corporal?

QUEISS.

[*Goes to the door and calls.*] Corporal!

Enter ORDERLY, *evidently trying to keep some one out.*

PASCHKE.

Where did you get to, Corporal?

ORDERLY.

Outside, sir.

PASCHKE.

So I said. Send the Usher at once across to the quarters of the Third Squadron and have this summons handed to Fraülein Volkhardt, daughter of Sergeant-Major Volkhardt. [*He takes it from the* CLERK.] Fraülein Volkhardt is to comply with it as soon as possible.

[*He motions impatiently to the* ORDERLY *to take the summons from him.*

ORDERLY.

[*Remains standing calmly at the door, peevishly.*] Yes, sir. But Fraülein Volkhardt is here already.

[*General astonishment.*

ORDERLY.

[*Condescends to continue.*] She has been waiting ever so long. Since I [*looking at the witness-list through his glasses*] let in Corporal Johannes Ludwig Queiss. She desires to be heard.

PASCHKE.

Why did you not report that to us?

ORDERLY.

Because she is not on the list of witnesses, and because women, according to the Instructions, are not to be admitted.

PASCHKE.

Oh? Well, let her come in now.

ORDERLY.

Very good, sir. [*Exit, and ushers in* KLARA.] Fraülein Volkhardt.

LEHDENBURG.

[*In a low tone.*] The Court is becoming a stage.

Enter KLARA *in a plain dark dress with a simple straw-hat on her head.*

PASCHKE.

You are Fraülein Volkhardt?

VOLKHARDT.

[*Excitedly.*] Excuse me, sir. Yes—this is my daughter.

PASCHKE.

Good, Sergeant-Major. [*To* KLARA.] You desire to be heard in the proceedings against Corporal Helbig, madam?

KLARA.

[*Constrainedly, but friendly.*] Yes.

PASCHKE.

You have something to tell us about it? Something important probably. Is that so?

KLARA.

Yes—only—you will excuse a question first, sir. Are the—— Have the witnesses been put on oath already?

PASCHKE.

No.

KLARA.

[*Urgently.*] No one has had to swear yet? None?

PASCHKE.

No, none.

KLARA.

[*Relieved.*] Thank you, sir.

PASCHKE.

Just calm yourself a little first, Fraülein. You are welcome to sit down, too.

KLARA.

Thank you, sir. I can stand very well.

PASCHKE.

As you please. Mr. Councillor, may I trouble you?

COUNCILLOR.

Very well, sir. [*Politely.*] M'yes. Well, Fraülein Volkhardt, will you, to begin with, let us know what information you have to give us? We can go into personal matters afterwards, for you see it is quite possible that your statement is not to the point, eh?

KLARA.

[*Nervously.*] That I do not think.

COUNCILLOR.

Well, that we shall learn directly. Now you know, I suppose, what the question is?

KLARA.

Yes, perfectly.

COUNCILLOR.

[*Approvingly.*] Good; that's right. And what have you to say to it, Fraülein?

KLARA.

[*With a sudden resolve.*] I know how Lieutenant von Lauffen and my foster-brother came to blows.

COUNCILLOR.

That is what we most earnestly desire to know. Well then, please.

KLARA.

Well—my foster-brother had been away from home for two years, at the Riding School at Hanover.

COUNCILLOR.

Very good.

KLARA.

And before he went we were half engaged, so to speak. Not exactly formally and openly, but yet so that he might consider me his promised wife——

COUNCILLOR.

Quite right.

[PASCHKE *puts his hand on the* COUNCILLOR'S *arm, as a hint to cease such interruptions.*

KLARA.

And so when he came back he—thought he had

reason for being jealous of Lieutenant von Lauffen. And that evening, a while back, he called the Lieutenant to account over it. The Lieutenant would not have it, and told him to leave the room. Then Helbig became more and more pressing, and at last he believed the Lieutenant had me hidden in his bedroom. And then he threw himself on the Lieutenant because he would not let him get at the door, and the Lieutenant struck him over the head with his sabre—but Helbig broke through to the door and tore it open—— [*Sensation.*

COUNCILLOR.

[*Taken aback.*] Yes, that all sounds very credible, but—Fraülein Volkhardt—allow me—how do you know all this so certainly? Were you——?

KLARA.

[*Curtly.*] Yes, I was in the room.

[VOLKHARDT *has watched events since* KLARA'S *entrance blankly; now he steps back staggering,* QUEISS *attending to him.*

KLARA.

[*In a low tone.*] I had gone to visit Lieutenant Von Lauffen. We were—— I love him.

[*Pause.*]

COUNCILLOR.

[*Dumbfounded*] Very good. Only—I don't know how I am to understand that.

PASCHKE.

I think it is quite clear, Mr. Councillor. At any

rate it will be sufficient for us to ask the prisoner and the witness, Lieutenant von Lauffen. Corporal Helbig, do you admit the description that Fraülein Volkhardt has just given?

HELBIG.

[*Bitterly.*] It must be all right, if she says so.
[*He sits down and hides his face in his hands.*

PASCHKE.

And you, Lieutenant von Lauffen?

LAUFFEN.

Yes, sir.

VOLKHARDT.

[*Seems not to have believed it all until* LAUFFEN'S *answer, for which he has waited in breathless expectation. Now he gives vent to a hoarse cry of fury, and tries to fly at* LAUFFEN.] Ha!

PASCHKE.

[*Warningly.*] Sergeant-Major! [*Uproar.*

QUEISS.

[*Holds* VOLKHARDT *fast with the strength of a giant and forces him down into one of the witnesses' chairs, whispering in sullen anger into his ear.*] Keep calm, Sergeant-Major. One is enough! Quiet now, Sergeant-Major.

[VOLKHARDT *sits panting on the chair. The* JUDGES *have for the most part jumped up from their places, and are watching the Sergeant-Major excitedly. Only the* SECOND COUNCILLOR *remains sitting.*

PASCHKE.

[*Sternly.*] What was that? Sergeant-Major Volkhardt, what was that?

QUEISS.

[*Firmly.*] You will excuse me, Major, I thought Sergeant-Major Volkhardt would fall, and so I supported him.

PASCHKE.

Was that really so?

[*The others look at each other in silence, shrugging their shoulders.*

LEHDENBURG.

[*Comes forward briskly and passes round the* JUDGES' *table to the two.*] Why, it's quite palpable, sir. Watched the occurrence most carefully. No doubt possible. A fainting fit. No wonder, either! [*Eyes* QUEISS *through his eye-glass.*] Lucky you ran to him, Corporal! Else it might have gone badly. Splendid, such presence of mind. That's the sort, Corporal. That's it, heavy cavalry. Nothing like it! [*To* VOLKHARDT.] Sergeant-Major Volkhardt [*makes a gesture at once encouraging and enjoining calmness*], 'n old veteran like you must not let himself be toppled over so easily! All right again now, isn't it?

VOLKHARDT.

[*Straightens himself up, significantly.*] Yes, Captain. It *has* to be!

Curtain

THE FOURTH ACT

SCENE *as in Act II.*

The room is at first dark.

LAUFFEN.

[*Is lying with his hands crossed behind his head on the settee. On the table and chairs, bestrewed about in confusion, lance-cap, bandolier, sword and gloves. After a while he gets up slowly, goes wearily to the door and calls.*] Michael.

[*Then he shuts the door again and remains standing by the writing-table.*

MICHAEL.

[*Enters.*] Your honour?

LAUFFEN.

You can light up, Michael.

MICHAEL.

Very well, sir. [*Lights the lamp.*

LAUFFEN.

And then tidy up.

MICHAEL.

Very well. [*He puts the things that are lying about in their places, while* LAUFFEN *watches him blankly. With the last article in his hand.*] Take coffee or tea, sir? [*As* LAUFFEN *does not reply.*] Is quite quickly made. Have got spirits of wine. Quite quickly made.

LAUFFEN.

No, let it alone, Michael. I want nothing.

MICHAEL.

[*After a time, timidly.*] Or—would like a tankard of beer from the town of Strasburg? 'T's killing day over there to-day; fine fresh cutlets.

LAUFFEN.

[*Sharply.*] Hold tongue, fellow. No, no. [*Swallows down his anger. More mildly.*] No, Michael, I want nothing. But—you are a good chap. [*Takes a handful of cigarettes from the box and gives them to him.*] There!

MICHAEL.

[*Tries to kiss his hand, overjoyed at the praise.*] Thanks, your honour.

LAUFFEN.

Oh bosh! Be off!

MICHAEL.

[*Going towards door.*] Any more orders, sir?

LAUFFEN.

No, nothing else. [*Takes watch out of pocket.*] Say,

now, Michael, how late is it? [*Taps the watch, holds it to his ear. In a low tone.*] The brute seems on strike.

MICHAEL.

Quarter to ten has just given warning at the Main Guard for tattoo.

LAUFFEN.

Really? All right. When you have done cleaning you can go to your den.

MICHAEL.

Ve' good, sir. [*Makes to go out.*

LAUFFEN.

[*Calls after him.*] Hi, Michael! Just first go across to Lieutenant von Höwen, I should like to have two words with him.

MICHAEL.

Ve' well. [*Repeats order.*] Would Lieutenant Höwen be good enough to come to your honour. For two words?

LAUFFEN.

Right. Be off! [*Exit* MICHAEL.

[LAUFFEN *left alone, walks up and down the room restlessly, at last goes to the mirror and puts his dress straight, buttons up his collar, and smoothes his hair with two little pocket-brushes.*

Enter HÖWEN, *looking somewhat awkward.*

LAUFFEN.

[*Advancing to meet him.*] Excuse me, Höwen, for sending to ask you to come. [*He halts, then breaks out.*] I—I had to talk to some one. I could stand it no longer.

HÖWEN.

Yes, I can understand that. However—I should have come to you.

LAUFFEN.

Really? [*He goes to* HÖWEN *and clasps his hand.*] I thank you for that.

HÖWEN.

[*After clasping his hand warmly.*] Sure enough, I should have come of myself. But—you know, Lauffen—I wanted a little time to—well, to calm down. Like that—directly after the trial—it would not do, I could not have borne the sight of you! [*With gathering anger.*] Do you know, I should have wanted to thrash you? Oh, yes—thrash you soundly.

[LAUFFEN *trembles violently and grits his teeth together.*

HÖWEN.

[*After walking up and down once or twice.*] Man alive, what have you brought on yourself? On yourself? on me? on us all? Us all who wear the sword-knot? Lord God! [*Draws a long breath, then more calmly.*] Lad, I loved you as a brother—just as in old days I did my younger brother, who went wrong at sixteen, just the same. You need not think, though, that I at all

regarded you as the blameless crown of creation? Oh no, lad, your many faults and naughtinesses I fully recognised, and in spite of that I took a delight in you, because you had the making of a real man in you. And now, now? If you had brought *some* good girl *or other* to grief—well, that might have passed. I should have called it one more of your naughty pranks. [*He laughs softly to himself.*] Why, yes, so illogical are we men. But, lad, that through your fault the fellows outside should have a right to let fly again about us, about our class—that you have given the dirty dogs a sound reason for their mud-throwings—that owing to you they can justly say, "How can an officer demand respect from those under him, when he himself does not respect their simplest and most natural feelings of honour?"—that, lad, that, by God, was accursedly ill-done of you! And I—I actually warned you that blasted evening! I saw the disaster coming. But no, no! Into it you fell—like a third-form boy. And when it all came out, then—then I should have liked to have treated you like a third-form boy, too.

[*A long silence.* Höwen *walks up and down excitedy.* Lauffen *meanwhile goes to the window.*

Lauffen.

[*After a while, with forced calm.*] How a man can change, to be sure. If any one had suggested to me a month ago that I would allow any one to talk like that to my face, I should have—— [*He gives a short laugh.*] Well, I know, Höwen, how you mean it.

HÖWEN.

[*Earnestly.*] That is the only reason why I spoke so.

LAUFFEN.

Well, no more. The mischief is not to be repaired. No good talking about it. The much more important question is—What next?

[HÖWEN *shrugs his shoulders violently, and stands playing at the writing-table with a paper-cutter.*

LAUFFEN.

[*Slowly, gloomily.*] Do you know, Höwen, that I am not so over and above grateful to you for having—at the trial, yonder, to-day—once or twice in a sort of way kept me from perjury?

HÖWEN.

Man, you are mad.

LAUFFEN.

[*Calmly.*] No—oh, not in the least. Will tell you why, too. If I had—committed perjury, the business was clean—out—decided. Clean—and plump. [*He jumps up excitedly.*] You—you have no idea how I am again—tossed this way and that, what state my mind is in, topsy-turvy and all in confusion! It is enough to make one mad!

HÖWEN.

You—don't know, I suppose, that perjury—means a convict prison?

LAUFFEN.

Oh, yes. I had ascertained that. But all the same, I should have had to go through with it. Or perhaps not?

[HÖWEN *shrugs his shoulders.*

LAUFFEN.

There you are. And this I will own to you—it was worse than a convict prison to me to see that man, Helbig, sitting before me. First one looks upon him as one of the common dogs, and then—one has to hide from him. I am forced to lie, and the thing brings me—this and that, take it!—advantage and he—he lies quite gratuitously, and knows it will do him harm, it must do him harm. That was worse than running the gauntlet—worse than penal servitude! By God, yes. But what was the use? I had to put up with it, and I had put it through. The affair was all smooth. And now you come ——

HÖWEN.

Lord in heaven, man! Klara Volkhardt would have been there all the same.

LAUFFEN.

[*Obstinately.*] Then that would not have made it quite smooth! In that case, deuce knows, my way was marked out for me. Instead of that, here I sit knocking my head against it over again. I am in a worse plight than before. I should like to run at the walls, and see if there is no loophole there. [*He throws himself on the settee again.*] What on earth am I to do now?

HÖWEN.

[*After a long pause, with palpable iciness.*] So then the matter is settled. M'yes—and as that was the only way in which you could decently get over the business—you must just see—wait for what may come. And—in the meantime there is no good in talking big about it. Don't you think so? Well, good-night, Lauffen. If you should want me, you know. [*Goes towards the door.*] Good-night. [*Exit.*

[LAUFFEN *looks after him in astonishment, once he takes a step or two as if to go after him, but stops. He makes a gesture of discouragement and sinks into the arm-chair at full length.*

[*Knocking. The first time* LAUFFEN *does not notice it. At the second he starts up.*

LAUFFEN.

Well? All right!

MICHAEL.

[*Enters, fastening the last button of his indoor jacket.*] It's the Sergeant-Major——

LAUFFEN.

[*Starting up*] Who?

MICHAEL.

The Sergeant-Major begs most respectfully-

LAUFFEN.

[*Springing up after a short hesitation.*] Let him come in!

MICHAEL.

Good, sir.

[*Steps back, and lets* VOLKHARDT *pass in, then exit.*

VOLKHARDT *comes in and stands to attention, is without his sword and carries in his hand his cap, which he soon lays aside; has still the Lancer tunic with the orders on which he wore in the forenoon at the court-martial.*

[*A long silence.*

LAUFFEN.

[*Constrainedly.*] You wanted to speak to me, Sergeant-Major?

VOLKHARDT.

[*Heavily.*] If you please, Lieutenant, I waited yonder—and in the darkness too—till a light was lighted here, and then I thought, Now it is time, now you can go across, and—here I am.

LAUFFEN.

Yes—and Sergeant-Major, we have to talk to each other.

VOLKHARDT.

At your order, sir. That we have.

LAUFFEN.

We—ell—Sergeant-Major [*impulsively*] I have done you a serious wrong, a wrong that cannot at all be

made right again. But—do move, Sergeant-Major! You are not on duty now.

[VOLKHARDT *stands somewhat more easy and lays down his cap.*

LAUFFEN.

Well—and, Sergeant-Major, I sincerely beg your forgiveness for this wrong. Sincerely, Sergeant-Major, and I *beg* it of you. I earnestly beg it of you. My word for it, Sergeant-Major, I would gladly give anything if I could make this business undone.

VOLKHARDT.

[*Dully.*] That is surely not possible, sir.

LAUFFEN.

No, of course not—unhappily. And that is just the frightful part—simply maddening. I have done you wrong, Sergeant-Major, and cannot make it right again. [*Hesitatingly.*] Sergeant-Major, shall I, for your and Klara's sake—— [*He is silenced by* VOLKHARDT'S *gaze.*] My God, I simply do not know what I am to do. You wished to speak to me, Sergeant-Major—perhaps you know of a way out of it?

VOLKHARDT.

[*Hoarsely.*] Very well, sir. [*Draws a revolver from the breast of his Lancer tunic.*] There.

LAUFFEN.

[*Firing up.*] Sergeant-Major, you are——! What does this mean?

VOLKHARDT.

Excuse me, sir, that is surely clear. This is my service revolver, loaded, and you have one too, sir, in the press there, that is the regulation. And—I thought—as that is the custom in such cases——

LAUFFEN.

Sergeant-Major, that is impossible.

VOLKHARDT.

[*Studiously raising his tone as he goes on.*] I beg most respectfully to say, sir, that it is certainly much more impossible that things should remain as they are, that I should be left like this with the girl, with everybody pointing their fingers at her, that my name should be utterly dragged in the mud, and nobody be punished for it! That is certainly—as God is in Heaven—much more out of the question. [*Roaring out.*] Justice must be done in the world.

LAUFFEN.

Yes, of course it must be, Sergeant-Major, naturally! But you must see yourself, there are cases—in which one cannot, however much one will—however much, Sergeant-Major——

[*Enter* KLARA. *After a rapid, anxious look round, she remains standing near the door.* LAUFFEN *and* VOLKHARDT *gaze at her in astonishment.*

VOLKHARDT.

[*Masters himself. Roughly.*] You? What do you come here for?

KLARA.

[*Simply.*] I followed you, father.

VOLKHARDT.

What—what can you want here? Eh? Go!

KLARA.

This is all about me. [*Resolutely.*] So I wish to be present.

VOLKHARDT.

Yes, there you are right. There, sir, does she not stand there, as if she was a wonder of honesty, as if she were innocence itself? As if she were still my good child that I have trusted entirely since the lad out there has lain under the earth. And now—now I would rather you lay yonder beside the boy under the turf than that shame should break over my head as it does here!

KLARA.

[*Beseechingly, but firmly.*] Father!

VOLKHARDT.

[*Turns silently from her to* LAUFFEN.] And now I am come to the man whose fault it all is, and tell him to give me satisfaction. [*He points to the revolver.*

[KLARA *moves a step forward in alarm.*

LAUFFEN.

[*Repelling him, in a tone of command.*] Sergeant-Major, you see, I have let you speak, and speak freely, because I see the wrong I have done, and I must also admit that you have good reason to be angry. But this simply will not do! That is out of the question! I *cannot* exchange shots with a non-commissioned officer. I am not allowed to.

VOLKHARDT.

[*Stepping back.*] With a non-commissioned officer? Why, yes, to be sure, I am that [*with a bitter laugh*]. Excuse me, Lieutenant, I—I had almost forgotten that! When for years, all through the regiment, one has been looked up to as—as a sort of show-piece and model, old Volkhardt, who was in the War, who rode in the great charge, that time at Vionville—then—then one may easily become too proud, Lieutenant, and forget one's rank. But now—now I am quite in my place again. Now, there is nothing wrong! A—a non-commissioned officer like me is not an equal by birth, of course, and [*pointing to* KLARA] she there can only look on it as an honour too, an undeserved honour! Aye, aye, such a thing—only ranks with second-class folk!

LAUFFEN.

[*Sharply.*] Sergeant-Major, say no more! You—you speak like a regular Radical ruffian! I warn you, Sergeant-Major, you will put the yoke round your neck with your talk!

VOLKHARDT.

[*Wildly.*] Quite so, sir. That I do not mind in the least! It no longer matters at all. What am I now but a vagabond, a quite low sort of vagabond? [*He laughs like a madman.*] Old fool that I was, I thought I was something, that I stood for something! How I did my duty all these long three and thirty years, as if—Lord knows—something wonderful depended on it! I gave myself to it, body and

soul! And—and if at times I got wild, because I must always remain what I now am, because I simply *could not* get any higher—I said to myself, It doesn't matter. Even your low rank has its honour. It's honour. Oh, yes? Lies and deceit! And—I deceived myself most of all!

[*He stops from sheer excitement.*

LAUFFEN.

[*Has several times vainly attempted to reply; sharply.*] Sergeant-Major, at least think what you are about!

[KLARA *meanwhile has thrown herself on a chair and hidden her face in her hands, only looking up from time to time in despair at her powerlessness.*

VOLKHARDT.

[*Not heeding* KLARA, *dully, half aside.*] This here, [*grasping at his Iron Cross*] this morning when I fastened it on, I thought to myself, you are the only one in the regiment that has that; no one else has it—not even the Colonel. And now? [*He tears the Cross off with quivering fingers.*] Down with the glittering fraud! It—it's nought but a couple of ounces of iron, and—and may just as well lie in the dust [*is on the point of throwing it on the floor, but refrains*], and yet I valued it above everything. I wanted to have it with me when my time came to go underground. What has come to me now. I no longer care to wear it. I must not? [*He shoves the Cross on the table, weeping with fury.*] Nay, not such a man as I. Not such a man!

LAUFFEN.

[*Coaxingly, but in a tone of superiority.*] Sergeant-Major, I earnestly beg of you, do calm yourself now at last! It is all nonsense that you are talking.

VOLKHARDT.

[*Appears to just realise once more* LAUFFEN'S *presence; slowly.*] Before, when all was dark here and I was over yonder in the dark too, I had made up my mind to do the business all by myself. [*Wildly.*] But no, I thought presently, the other shall be in it too. And if he will not give you your right [*bursting out*] I will take it.

[*He suddenly lifts his revolver in the direction of* LAUFFEN. LAUFFEN *stands motionless and looks* VOLKHARDT *steadily in the eyes.* KLARA *throws herself with a cry of* "Father!" *before* VOLKHARDT *and tries to shield* LAUFFEN.

VOLKHARDT.

[*Seizes her by the arm with his left and forces her on to her knees with a powerful heave. He aims at* LAUFFEN, *then suddenly his arm begins to tremble, and he lets the weapon sink slowly and reluctantly. Half aside, gnashing his teeth.*] I cannot do it. He is my Lieutenant. I cannot do it; I am afraid to! [*Sobbing with fury.*] I have been obeying orders for tens of years, till it has sucked the marrow out of my bones! Afraid! afraid! [*Gradually he masters himself, then with great bitterness.*] Long ago the father

saved my life, the son takes it from me again. [*Drawing himself up more calmly.*] We are quits.

[KLARA, *meanwhile, his hard grip having relaxed, has half risen to her feet again.*

VOLKHARDT.

[*Gazes long at her, bends slowly down to her as if meaning to kiss her on the forehead. Tears run down his cheeks.*] You! My poor girl. We two—— [*All at once draws himself up again abruptly; harshly and roughly.*] Come, get up! We will see that we get out of this. We will go and hide ourselves somewhere in a mousehole, as deep as we can, so that we may no longer see the people, and how they point their fingers at us, how they whisper to each other—"There, look, that's she, the young one, and that's he, the old man." Don't look me in the face like that, you! Not so calmly! I tell you don't stand there like—like this morning, when you showed your disgrace to the world, before everybody, and without shame!

[KLARA *lowers her head a little.*

VOLKHARDT.

[*Points to the door.*] There, go! Let there be an end of it! [*As* KLARA *hesitates, menacingly.*] Go!

KLARA.

[*At first haltingly, then clearly and decidedly.*] I wish to stay, father [*waving lightly towards* LAUFFEN] with him. Now most of all! You wrong him, father. If I had been firm we should all still be holding up our heads, he and you—and I. I am to

blame, and I alone [*in a lower tone, and tenderly, as if making a confession*] because I loved him. I could not do anything else—I threw myself on his neck!

VOLKHARDT.

[*Staggering and catching at his forehead.*] Who—are you then—all of a sudden? You threw yourself——? You are like that? Like that? Run, run. And when he has had enough of you, there are others besides, and then—like that? [*With a gurgling cry, gnashing.*] Lieutenant's drab. Go to the devil!

[*He raises the revolver like lightning against* KLARA *and fires.*

LAUFFEN.

[*Yells.*] Sergeant-Major!

[*He rushes at* VOLKHARDT *to hold him back, but is too late.*

KLARA.

[*Catches at her breast, tottering, in a breaking voice.*] Thank you, father. [*Falls heavily to the ground.*

[VOLKHARDT *watches her fall with eyes fixed with horror. He lets the revolver fall from his hand, and seems very slowly to realise what he has done. As* LAUFFEN *makes as if to go to* KLARA, *waves him back with a gesture that signifies "Now she is mine once more." He kneels beside her, and takes her head carefully on his lap.*

KLARA.

[*Opens her eyes, and letting her father hold one hand, gropes faintly for* LAUFFEN ; *softly.*] My lad!

[LAUFFEN *kneels down beside her sobbing.* KLARA *raises her head a little and smiles faintly. Then she sinks back and expires.*

VOLKHARDT.

[*Lets her carefully and slowly glide to the floor, gives one more long look at her, and then rises heavily. When he is erect, accusingly but quite calmly.*] Now, sir, you can call the under-officer on duty again.

Curtain.

Printed by BALLANTYNE & CO. LIMITED
Tavistock Street, London